CHILDREN RECLAIMED FOR LIFE.

THE STORY OF
DR. BARNARDO'S WORK
IN LONDON.

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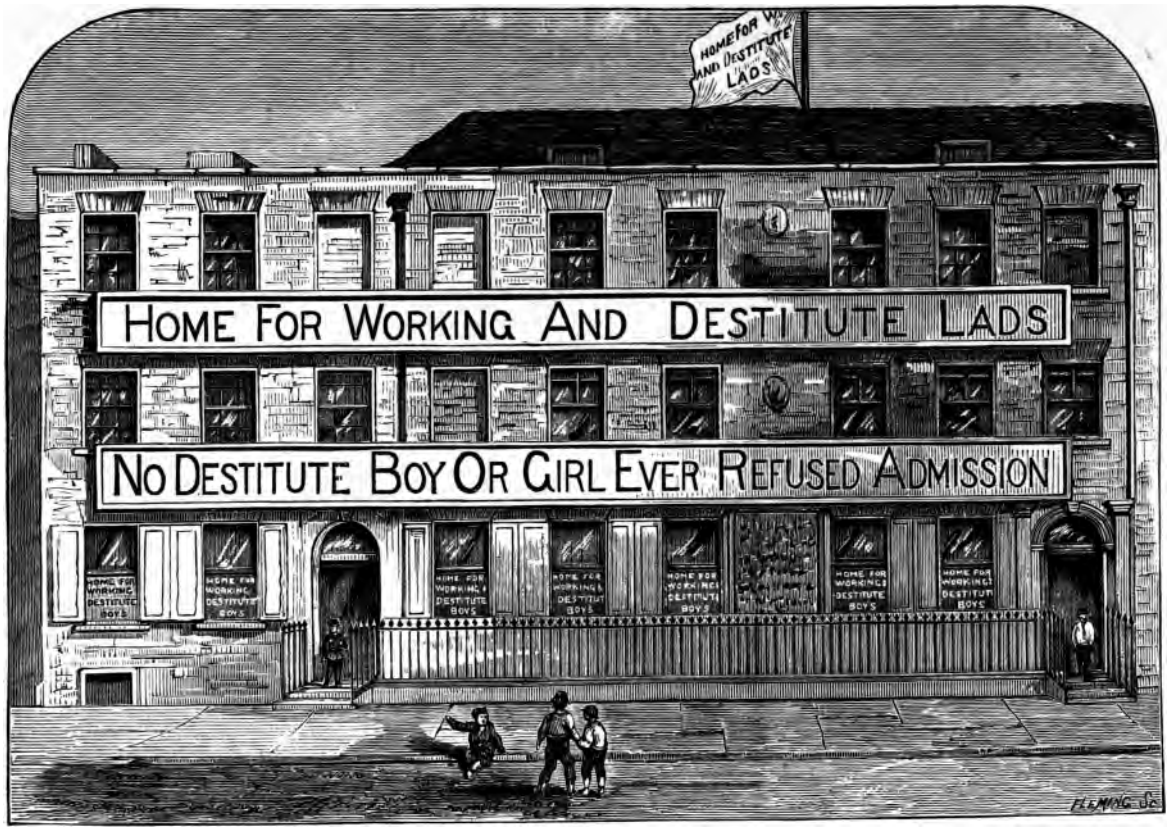

OUTSIDE VIEW OF THE BOYS' HOME.

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CHILDREN

RECLAIMED FOR LIFE.

THE STORY

OF

Dr. Barnardo's Work in London.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

'THE ROMANCE OF THE STREETS,'

&c., &c.

With an Introduction by the Author of

'JESSICA'S FIRST PRAYER.'

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CHAPTER XIV.

INTRODUCTION.

SOME few years ago Charles Dickens wrote one of his most touching and tender sketches of places he visited in the streets of London, and called it 'A Star in the East.' It was a description of the Children's Hospital, in the East End of our great city; a noble charity, begun in the simplest and homeliest manner, and too quickly consecrated by the early death of its founder.

Since then another Star has arisen in the East. The hospital deals with sick children only, taking them from their miserable homes, and nursing them carefully and gently through a few weeks of suffering, which are rendered almost pleasant from contrast with the rest of their sad experience, and then perforce returning them to their unhealthy dwelling-places. But the Industrial Home which is planted there, little more than a stone's throw from its elder charity, lifts the children it can admit within its walls, right away from the present misery, and the future degradation to which they are exposed; and setting their young feet fairly upon the lowest of those 'great

altar stairs, which lead through darkness up to God,' makes it possible for the wretched gutter-children of our civilisation to become honest men, and true Christians.

Four years ago I had the good fortune to meet accidentally, as it seemed, with Dr. Barnardo, the founder of the Boy's Home in Stepney-causeway. I was already interested, with a very great and deep interest, in the welfare of our street-children, whose wan and pinched faces look up to us, on every causeway, with strange mute questions in their eyes. Dr. Barnardo told me of his work—such a work as our Lord and Master would Himself have undertaken, had He been dwelling in human form among us now—threading by midnight the dark and close and filthy slums of the East-End streets, and by the river banks, in quest of homeless boys; seeking them as a merchant man seeking goodly pearls—truly a singular merchandise amongst all the grand commercial enterprises of London.

It was not long before I visited Stepney-causeway, and its 'Home for Working and Destitute Lads.' From the pavement in front of the Royal Exchange I stepped into a Blackwall omnibus, and found myself one of a company of decidedly unfashionable people going home eastwards. The conductor addressed me as 'my dear,' in a friendly but not disrespectful tone, and his friendliness and sympathies were expressed quite impartially to all present. He knew Stepney-causeway and its Home quite well, and took care not to carry me farther than my destination. It is a narrow, squalid, uninviting street, lying on the river-side of Commercial-road, with

that peculiar aspect of mere vulgar, modern wretchedness and dirt, which takes away from the East End of London any claim to picturesque poverty, such as may often be seen in the poor quarters of old continental cities.

It is now between three and four years ago, and the Home was then simply a three-story house, like others in the same street, with nothing to distinguish it from them but a board over the door like a trade signboard. There were nine or ten rooms in it, and every inch was occupied, nay, over-crowded. There were very few conveniences, and a good many disadvantages. It was next thing to impossible to isolate the poor outcasts when they were admitted, suffering, as most of them did suffer when picked up in the streets, from disgusting and infectious ailments, which made them objectionable companions to the boys already cleansed and healed. The bedrooms, where each lad was wisely provided with a separate hammock, were too closely packed with these canvas stretchers, in which they must have rested luxuriously, after having known the open streets and hard flags as their chamber. The kitchen was small and dark, being underground; but there was food in it in plenty, good, wholesome food, served regularly, and with hearty good-will towards the homeless boys, who had often been forced to dine upon the savoury smell from cooking-house kitchens, and upon that alone.

Yes; but it was a Home. There was a mother in it; a good-tempered, kindly woman, whom the boys, one and all, called mother. As far as I can remember that first visit—for I have

made many visits since—there was a father too; but I am not so sure of this. Father is not a name of good omen amongst these destitute lads, who have never known a father, or known him only as their worst foe. There was certainly and unmistakably a friend there; I might almost say a saviour. One was there who had gone out through storm and darkness, in the dead of night and the dead of the winter, forgetting the comforts and pleasures of his own fireside, as he paced the streets in search of them, following them down to their lowest haunts and their deepest wretchedness. There was a close, personal tie between each rescued lad and his friend. It was his voice that had first fallen on his ear; his hand that had first touched him; he, himself, who had led him home, and welcomed him to it with much rejoicing. There was not a boy there whose face did not brighten when he heard and saw Dr. Barnardo, his own close friend, drawing near to him.

I cannot help looking back half-regretfully to those early days. The work has grown and spread so wonderfully, that the old simple home is quite metamorphosed. Who does not almost grieve over those old picturesque, inconvenient night refuges, which used to be crowded with ragged vagrants every winter's night, but which are now improved into clean, white, high wards, almost like workhouse wards?

In Stepney-causeway there is now one Home large enough for 150 boys, whilst another shelters 60 boys. Much building has been put up; the old disadvantages have been done away with; there are school-rooms, one a splendid room,

lofty and airy; bath-rooms, dining-rooms, and necessary offices of every description, all of them needed, and all great improvements on the original dwelling. Brush-making, tailoring, shoemaking, and such handicrafts, are diligently taught. Wonderful feats in arithmetic, which make my brain swim, are successfully attempted; even drawing has found a place there, to say nothing of singing and instrumental music. I am glad because of it all, and marvel how the funds come in with no machinery for gathering them; yet I sigh a little over the first plain simple home. It was like those earliest of all early Christian days, so beautiful, yet so impossible to retain, when 'the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul; neither said any of them that aught of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had all things common.'

'Neither was there any among them that lacked,' adds the narrative. How many are there among us who ever strive to realise the condition of those who lack everything? 'I blush in all things to abound,' we sing, whilst hard by, but a step from our own door, there are those who are in want of the commonest necessaries of life. We should blush for that. Our comforts are so common, that we consider them and call them necessaries, forgetful that below us are thousands, ay, hundreds of thousands of our fellow-country-people, who never sit down to a wholesome, well-cooked meal; who never clothe themselves with garments made for them; and never put their sore and swollen feet into shoes that fit them. These comforts are such common things to us, that we accept them as if they came like

the air and light, the summer and winter, which come alike to all. We think too little of the ragged, barefoot, starved, and homeless crowds of boys and girls, young children like our own cherished little nestlings, who are struggling on for bare existence, dying by thousands, or living to grow up with strange notions of what Christianity must mean. Christ left His work to His Church, and how has the Church done it? We dare not ask the gutter-children of our towns for an answer.

There are philosophers among us who teach that it is unwise to stretch out a helping hand to those who are struggling for existence; that nature selects the strongest and fittest for survival; and if we interfere with her we do so at the cost of perpetuating an enfeebled and deteriorated race. But these boys and girls, gathered out of the streets into the Homes, are the very individuals whom nature has selected for existence, who prove their selection by having outlived the innumerable perils of their hard life. A few amongst them might have perished in the end if left out in the cold of the streets, but the majority have lived long enough to continue to live and to grow up. Grow up to be what? Thieves, drunkards, prostitutes; the plague and shame of our civilisation and Christianity, and the parents of a fresh generation of criminals to be the pest of our children's lives. We cannot afford to leave these London savages to run their course. Whatever may be urged *against* Hospitals for Sick Children, can be urged *for* such Homes as give them the chance of entering upon life as well-trained men *and* women, rather than as embruted and degraded ruffians.

There is no need for me to enter into any detailed statement of Dr. Barnardo's work. This is done, in the following pages, by another of his friends and cordial well-wishers. The pure and simple aim of it all is to raise from the very dregs of the populace a body of trained, intelligent, trustworthy workmen, who will become citizens by-and-by, and wield a power in the State. It is a patriotic project; but it is more than this. An effort is made to bring them to such a knowledge of Christ as shall induce them to choose Him for their Lord and Master, to whom they owe the same loyal service that is due from ourselves. We call Him Master and Lord, and we do well, for so He is. But how have we discharged our service? What manner of followers are we, whilst we neglect the children, whom eighteen centuries ago He called to His arms, and blessed with the tenderest of blessings? We have not caught His Spirit in this matter yet.

Yet there is one serious danger to be guarded against, arising from our sympathy with street-children. Nothing is worse for them, neglect itself is far better, than the easy method of gratifying our emotional pity, and pacifying our conscience, by simply taking money out of our purse, and dropping it into their outstretched little hands. Better to drop a live coal upon the quivering palm! If we can do nothing more than this, for Christ's sake let us refrain from doing them this injury. Let them creep back to their miserable haunts, starving and famishing, rather than meet with such a false charity. Whatever the pretext may be, however plausible the reason for

begging, it is always a cruel wrong to the child when we suffer it to succeed.

How, then, are we to succour and save these helpless little ones? One course at least is open to us. Let us heartily and thoughtfully give our aid to those who are willing to take the hardest share of the work from us, if we are not able to bear the heavy burden ourselves. Not aid in money only, but in sympathy, keeping our own hearts fresh with healthy pity; and in thoughtfulness, fanning in others the interest that is too apt to die out; and in prayer, whereby we do not enlist God's help, which is freely given, but we strengthen ourselves by feeling anew the links that bind us to Him, when we are proving ourselves 'fellow-workers with God.'

There are several Stars glimmering in the East. Let it be our part to see that no cloud which we can dissipate shall obscure their shining, and cause them to disappear altogether from the heavens. They were wise men who saw the Star in the East, and forthwith hastened to travel far to worship Him who was born King. Foolish star-gazers might not have seen its single ray; or, seeing it, did not care to discover its meaning and follow its guidance. Neither were the wise men staggered and disappointed when it led them only to the cradle of a babe born in a manger, with none to care for Him but a poor working man and woman. They fell down, and worshipped the child; but that was not all. They opened their treasures, and presented unto Him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. Wise men! they shrank not from His lowliness, and

poverty, and helplessness. It was enough that they had seen His Star in the East. They knew not, until they had passed the mysterious line which separates us from the other life, to whom they had presented their costly gifts.

The Star stands now over many a roof where young children are. Let us hasten to open our treasures; and by-and-by we too shall know to whom we have given our gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

I.

School or Prison.

CHAPTER I.

SCHOOL OR PRISON.

IN a beautiful and productive world like ours poverty and consequent suffering come as the results of sin and ignorance. This is, however, a charitable age, and because it is so the question continually arises in the minds of those who are friends of progress, Why should want and squalor abound in overcrowded cities, while millions of acres in accessible countries invite the hand of industry? 'Charity consists in helping the needy to help themselves,' but very tardily have people acknowledged the justice of this truism. How shall we best show charity to the children of the streets? In the days of our grandfathers charity to the poor was supposed to consist in dispensing money to every importunate beggar who could show a foul array of rags and affect wretchedness in general, but we have happily discovered a more excellent way of affording relief. Mere money is not always the most urgent want of the suffering; though we are able to make money do effective service in oiling the wheels of our charitable machinery, it will not do everything, and in some cases it may do harm. Personal advice and assistance are frequently more serviceable to the distressed than hard cash, while it is indisputable that the readiest way to perpetuate

rags and imposture is to subsidise them with alms. Do indiscriminate almsgivers ever reason with themselves, and push their reasoning to logical conclusions? They have tender hearts, and are easily impressed; they toss a mendicant sixpence because he is ill-clothed and shams hunger, and the act affords considerable relief to their minds: the beggar goes further on, and by the most potent arguments he knows—whining and shivering—he draws another sixpence from the next 'soft Tommy' encountered, and thus proves to his own satisfaction that whining and shivering pay better than digging and sowing. In this way the really deserving are overlooked, and imposture is encouraged; for while dishonest arts procure beggars a fat living, they will no more part with the rags and tricks of their craft than a prosperous trader will part with his shop or his stall. The wise philanthropist not only relieves his client, but seeks to ennoble him. He goes to the outcast and shows him that his necessities are at least not creditable, that his begging should give place to something better, and that money to be beneficial must not be received as the gift of pity. He teaches that money blesses none but the self-reliant and the industrious, its possession tending to injure rather than improve the idle and improvident. The Christian teacher is ready to relieve the pressing wants of those who are sick or who are in any other way rendered unable to help themselves, but he strictly inculcates the doctrine of 'no working, no eating.' The Bible rules his whole action, and, while guided by that standard, he has a hand to relieve want but an eye to detect imposture.

We seek to lay Christian hands on the waifs of the street, for the work of reformation will not be complete if it stop short of Christianising them. Imparting mere knowledge to a child,

and supplying him with better clothes and lodgings, do not necessarily raise his moral character: the root of the evil will not be touched if we withhold the gospel. Mere secular education may even prove so far an evil as to enable its possessor to excel in crime; this it has too frequently done. A pseudo-religious teaching will produce no better results, for who has not noticed how signally Romanism fails in touching the hearts, and thus in amending the moral habits of its votaries? Rome commands a large army of priests, friars, and sisters of mercy, besides all the more imposing paraphernalia of charity; she is liberal in her tinsel gifts, but she holds back the true gold, the result being that her influence is not a healing influence; the sinner is by much of Popish teaching encouraged to remain in sin, and at the best is pointed to the Virgin instead of to Christ. On the contrary, Christ is the daily pattern of the youth-rescuer in London, and His gospel the perpetual instrument of his holy work. A child may be laid hold of, clothed, and supplied with every temporal want, but, unless nature be conquered, the natural love of evil will remain. The leopard must change his spots, and the Ethiopian his skin, but by one Hand alone can this miracle be wrought. Hence, as regards what is popularly called the Ragged School, the Bible must be in the school, and no school must be without a Bible; for, to borrow a sentiment of the late Duke of Wellington, secular education, if separated from moral and religious instruction, will only make clever devils.

I purpose saying something about the habits and condition of the lowest class of children in London, of the manner of reaching them, and of the results which have already rewarded those who spend energy and substance in this high service. The law of the land may in due time prescribe that every child must be sent

to school, but the most sanguine will not expect to see the hearts of children reached by official agency. Something far higher is needed. Good rulers stand first among national blessings, but it does not appear that God employs the State to do the work of the Church: He prefers humbler and less cumbersome means. The work to be done must also be done in God's appointed way, or success will not follow. In His eye none are really reclaimed until they are Christianised. One might as well hope to brighten the clogged wheels of a delicately-made watch by scrubbing them with soap and water, as expect to polish jewels taken from city slums without the gospel.

The commercially-important man entering the city morning by morning to act a part on 'Change, and to make fresh additions to an already ample fortune, may scarce realise that a ragged child lives in a little world as real as the little world of the millionaire. To the rich and easy-living, mere waifs and strays may appear of no more worth than so many flies infesting the narrow streets, but they are valuable in the estimation of more loving hearts. The poor street Arab has his days of misery and of pleasure, his petty gains and painful losses, and these may be equally important in God's sight with the adventures of men who risk their own and other people's wealth in money-market speculations. The humblest have life crises, and if a Christian friend is near, a child may possibly be snatched from ruin at a critical conjuncture.

There was once a little fellow who paid for bed and board at a ragged-school lodging-house, until he was overtaken by trouble in consequence of purloining a neighbour's shirts. As the thief could not wear the articles, they were disposed of at a rag-shop, and circumstances led to the discovery of the trans-

action. Arraigned before the magistrate, the culprit would have been consigned to gaol had not the master of the Home, stepping forward, asked to be allowed to take charge of the offender. This prayer was granted, and instead of falling into the hands of warders at the House of Correction, the youthful transgressor came in contact with a Christian adviser, was led to repent of his grave offence, and subsequently gained an honest character. If a friend be near at the critical moment, a child may be saved, otherwise a life may be wrecked. It is notorious that many very young children are abroad in London who 'keep' themselves, or live by their wits, and numbers of these have dissipated or spiteful relatives, whose paternal instincts, dulled by gin and criminal associations, have not hindered their turning their own offspring adrift to perish as they may. Children of this class are frequently befriended by their teachers, by being introduced into industrial homes, or by being otherwise assisted to take the first step upward to industry and virtue. Hence we perceive the importance of industrial homes like the one instituted by Dr. Barnardo in Stepney-causeway.

Street waifs, like the rest of us, are creatures of circumstances, and as they *will* live, either to be a plague or a credit to society, it might be well occasionally to ask ourselves, Are we making the best of them? They are creatures of circumstances, which, in their case, chiefly tell against them. 'Boys will be boys,' and *vice versâ;* but do we consider that offences which in one child simply provoke wholesome reproof, in another entail a prison penalty? Christian teachers understand how faults should be corrected, but the State stimulates into active life what it seeks to kill. Nature provides for the child and the adult forms of food suitable for each, and this suggests

a discipline adapted to each; but the wisdom of the State enacts a common law for both, and does infinite mischief thereby. Commit childish offenders to gaol, and they will swiftly and surely be transformed into confirmed felons. Yet the State affects caution and prudence, and supplies criminal children with employment; but nothing good is to be learned within prison walls, and he who has been schooled there finds the world an uphill path, and commonly takes to thieving. School Boards may act the part of overseers, and issue salutary regulations, but in decidedly Christian work officialism exercises a deadening influence. What street waifs need is an industrial Christian training, and this alone will fit them to enter honourably into the battle of life. An industrial home, in a large measure self-supporting, like the one established at Stepney-causeway, is a powerful agency for supplying the labour-market with genuine material, but prison workshops are training-places for gaol-birds. The State, as such, knows nothing of reclaiming criminals; it punishes without healing the disease, using force and money to maintain costly prisons, which otherwise employed might aid in accomplishing a genuine reformation. Whoever lays hold of a street waif seizes a fine opportunity, for, judiciously dealt with, juvenile criminals may be quickly disciplined into promising characters. Christian teachers discriminate; the State cannot discriminate, consequently its administration of justice often means little more than initiating into advanced evil courses those who have never learned the meaning of right.

Take an example. What would the State, or even the magnates of the London School Board say to a subject, aged fourteen, who, being too conscientious to be 'religious,' stated in

plain language that he scorned to be a hypocrite? 'Can't afford to be religious!' bluntly confessed one of this description. He was not void of native shrewdness: what could he mean? He made one among a number of somewhat unruly characters who were consigned to the care of a lady teacher, to be conquered by feminine kindness, and she gained an insight into the mystery. Not afford to be religious? Why not? The boy worked in a timber-yard at wages of four shillings a week, and being unable to live on that scanty allowance, he regularly stole sufficient wood to make up any deficiency. Conscience condemned the theft; but, for the time being, hunger proved stronger than conscience, and the ingenious Jim worked the purloined wood into a saleable shape. Suppose, now, that Jim had been taken in the very act, how would the State have corrected him? The expensive machinery of the law would have been set in motion to examine, convict, imprison, and make Jim a confirmed felon. Nor would the work have been half done, for what good traits remained in his character would have been left in the prison. Happily for himself, Jim sat at the feet of a teacher wiser than the State. He was affectionately advised to try honesty for a month, and the advice was taken. The month was a time of trial, but the boy passed through the ordeal, and came out refined. He found it needful to work harder than usual in order to divert his mind from the temptation, for the wood seemed to ask him to take what no one would miss, and hunger was hard to be endured. His master, little suspecting what was happening, noticed that Jim was obliging and industrious, and therefore raised the boy's wages, thus placing him above the necessity of starving any more. Jim being confirmed in his opinion that honesty is the best policy,

became also a Christian and a happy communicant. The State with its prisons can never correct in this way, but the school can, and we judge the tree by its fruits.

I am not without hope that the State will in time cease to supply material for prisons to feed upon. In theory, how is a gaol supposed to influence a child-criminal? The prison is a means used by the State for revenging society on wrong-doers, and a lodging within the frowning walls is supposed to exercise a corrective effect. Humiliation is inflicted, and feelings of penitence engendered, so that when the offender again walks the outer world he is cowed into a virtuous citizen. He has tasted of the fruits of sin, he has discovered whither thieving leads, and with a host of unpleasant reminiscences, is it likely that he will make a second experiment in a badly-rewarded art? This is the theory, and it is well enough in its way, but we deal with facts. It is doubtless true that the young outcast during his earliest experiences rather trembles at the prospect of being 'quodded,' as he expresses it, but his quiverings have their spring in ignorance. Perhaps bolder companions have assured him that 'prison' is really synonymous with a jolly life, yet he half distrusts the news, suspecting the boast may be founded in bravado. Misgivingly, therefore, does the waif for the first time enter the uncanny portals of the gaol; but, if his sentence be of sufficient length, a day in the dreaded precincts proves him to have been mistaken, and entirely dissipates his fear. For the first time the young thief is comfortably lodged, sits down to regular, well-cooked meals, such as he never feasted on before, and altogether is treated with a consideration unknown in the back street or alley of his nativity. True, there are other things to be thought about—the credit attached to honesty and the dishonour insepar-

able from crooked courses; but of such things neither the waif nor his connections care to take account. They are none of them troubled with those sensitive feelings so familiar to educated people, and they judge accordingly. What, then, are prison officials to offenders just beginning their worldly career but gentlemen who unintentionally offer a premium on crime? Gaol life ceases to exercise any deterrent effect on the subjects in question: on the contrary, it is regarded by some of them as a luxury to be desired, for the chaplain of Newgate once testified that were the prison open to all comers, numbers would voluntarily accept the humiliating discipline for the sake of enjoying a comfortable home. The gaol, with its pseudo-industries, will never transform either raw or confirmed criminals into honest people, but the school with its industrial home may, by the blessing of God, achieve even this miracle.

Take another instance from real life. A gaol-bird, aged thirteen, who confessed to having been 'quodded' a number of times, applied for admission into a school, and was admitted. After having been excluded for theft, he begged hard for forgiveness, was allowed to stand over for a time, and was at last once more admitted into the class. Of course he was sternly reproved and affectionately advised. He listened to what was said, began to study with diligence, made progress, and showed signs of real reformation. Judge the tree by its fruits, and choose between the school and the prison.

To pursue this subject further; the State is liable to make mistakes, and to impose a prison discipline on those who do not need it, or who have not merited it, and thus the innocent may be ruined by receiving lessons in villany. Do I seem to exaggerate? Facts will sustain the assertion. It is an offence to

beg, and they best further the cause of true charity who abstain from dispensing alms to unknown subjects; but, nevertheless, none dare assert that instances may not occur in which begging may be justified, and giving may be a duty. One cold rainy day, a little fellow, whose mother lay sick, sat shivering in the street, and though he had hoped to obtain a few halfpence, the sun was nearly on the horizon, and Willie had not even a penny wherewith to buy a loaf. At last an accident happened to befriend him, for the wind caught the umbrella of an old gentleman, ruthlessly turning that useful article inside out, and completing his discomfiture by sending his hat whirling and tumbling through the water and mud. After Willie had recovered the hat, the pleasant-looking personage took a purse from his pocket to find sixpence, and handing over the reward, sent the delighted boy bounding homeward, with bright visions of what he would carry home to his mother. Willie was fast making way towards a bakery, but before he reached the shop, the lynx-eye of Z 1001 detected him, and marked his eager expression and clenched fist. 'Halloa, what now?' 'Only a sixpence, sir,' cried Willie, in terror, expecting what was about to happen. Only a sixpence? What could the young rascal mean? It was half-a-sovereign! What right had that little imp to so much money? Instead of being allowed to carry food to his sick mother, Willie was lodged in the cell of a neighbouring station-house.

In the mean time the old gentleman whose umbrella came to grief reached home, to make an unwelcome discovery—his purse was gone! The loss was at once accounted for—the young rascal in the street, it was supposed, had stolen it, and so a message was despatched to the very station to which Z 1001 was attached. Carried before a magistrate, the chain of convict-

ing circumstantial evidence appeared to be complete; 'justice' and the shrewd policeman triumphed, and honest, truth-loving Willie was consigned to prison, to associate with roughs and thieves, from whose punishment and his own misfortune the State expected him to learn lessons of honesty.

During the time of Willie's incarceration his mother became well enough to find employment at the old clothes' shop of a certain Jew, and one day, while cutting up a coat—one purchased from the old gentleman whose hat and umbrella the wind treated so unbecomingly—what should come to light in the lining but a purse, the lost purse, to atone for the loss of which her honest boy was suffering. Now, at last, the truth revealed itself; the whole story was told in open court, Willie was taken from prison, and several friends subscribed a fund sufficient to start both him and his mother in business. For the facts of this and some other illustrations I am indebted to documents made public by the Ragged School Union, which are not read so extensively as they deserve to be. I cannot help fearing that the State has unwittingly laid its hands on many an innocent one and been his ruin, on many a tender one and crushed him to despair. It must be so, for all mortal things must err.

Prison rulers might as well seek to cure the sick by establishing hospitals for their punishment as to reclaim children of tender years by means of the discipline they impose. Do we sufficiently remember that a child will naturally do wrong until he is taught to do right? A lady once remarked to an archbishop that she did not intend to educate her children until such time as they came to years of maturity. 'Madam,' replied the ready prelate, 'if you do not educate them the devil will.' The prison is too often the devil's school.

II.

Parents who are no Parents — The Street Philanthropist's Materials.

CHAPTER II.

PARENTS WHO ARE NO PARENTS.—THE STREET PHILANTHROPIST'S MATERIAL.

PERSONS who are familiar with the work of reclaiming destitute juveniles know that they are not to be judged by the same rule as other children, for they know nothing of the discipline of parental care. In the main, the little Arab is his own master, and if by 'father' and 'mother' we mean persons who affectionately welcome their child home at night, and send him to school with their blessing in the morning, he never knew father or mother. He uses his own judgment and follows his own inclination. On his first taking the school into favour he is looked upon by his faster companions as 'a religious cove;' and should he continue to go, he is at once set down as a 'character' to be avoided by all who formerly called him their 'pal.' Should he, on the contrary, relinquish the school, no parent or guardian will chide or punish him: he and his teacher have the business altogether between themselves.

Some of those who have parents are even worse off than they who have none, for no slight hindrance to the work of reformation is found in those parents who systematically fatten upon the dishonourable gains of their tender offspring. A preacher

lately depicted a child whose wants he summed up in one word —mother. The child is ragged, dirty, sick, and sorry; indeed, it stands in need of all the necessities of existence; but bring forward its mother, and you give it everything. If a good mother be all this, how deplorable the condition of those whose mothers are no mothers, and whose fathers are contemptible loafers, willing to lean on the tender reed of childhood, if it will but support them in idleness. A Good Samaritan once visited the home of a little slattern, who, occupying a place at a London crossing, contrived to disguise her begging practices and elude the police. When the visitor walked up to the door of the girl's lodging, in a dusky recess of Drury-lane, it transpired that the child was a main support of the family, her strong and idle parents regarding children as sent into the world to work for their elders. The father, a powerful Irishman, sat at the room door; other members of the family were lounging about, while the mother, in the act of preparing 'tea,' was giving the finishing turns to a relish in the frying-pan. The bread-winner, and in that character the principal person in this unpicturesque scene, was the little ragged maid whose musical voice and stumpy broom wrought on kind-hearted people, and drew from their pockets sufficient to support her parents. The visitor desired to get the child into a school, but 'the little darlint' was too profitable; for what would her parents do without the coppers she brought home as regularly as sunset? Entreaty was of no avail, but in these days, under the new School Board Act, parental selfishness may be more successfully dealt with than of old.

We see, then, that the mere possession of parents is not necessarily advantageous to a street waif. Parents like the

Irishman and his wife are their child's constant enemies, but a yet lower depth is reached by those who grossly ill-use their offspring. Said a deplorable-looking lad, on being asked why he came unwashed to school, 'You don't know how it is. I have not been home for a week, because my father and mother are always drunk, and they would as soon kill me as look at me. I sleep sometimes in a cart or coal waggon; last night I slept in a shed with a donkey in it.' How did he live? 'I go out costermongering,' he said. 'Sometimes I sell out, and if I do not I lose by it: sometimes I have food, but very often none.' Can we be surprised if unfortunate boys who are used worse than dogs at home come at length to wish that their parents were dead? Evil generates evil, and we deplore the fact, and yet we rejoice that moral influences are thus powerful, because, on the other hand, good begets good, and Divine grace brings good out of evil. Evil, through long growth and the neglect of the Church, may assume such proportions as to make us apprehensive for the future; but we know that there is a limit to its progress, for, strengthened by God, heroic workers are gaining ground, and becoming a power before which the prince of darkness trembles.

Only allow your little Arab to taste the sweets of knowledge, and touch his heart with kindness, and he will in many instances reward you by pressing forward with eagerness in the upward path; his injudicious earnestness may even need to be checked by a tender hand. A blind girl having learned to read, became so overjoyed on finding that knowledge could be communicated by touch, that in a calculating mood she actually pared her finger ends, to make the sense of touch still more delicate. She speedily found to her cost that God's work could not be improved

upon, for sensitive as her fingers became, the pain was unendurable, and she became incapable of reading at all, until, in blank lonely sorrow, she happened to press the book to her face, and found that the characters could be deciphered by the lips. Thus she read with her lips until the injured fingers recovered.

The brave bearing of children under trial, and their manner of pursuing knowledge under difficulties, are sometimes affecting and extraordinary. Little Henry was of this class. His father being a carman, seldom in constant employment, and his mother one who earned a scanty pittance by charing, Henry was occasionally ill from sheer want; but though a 'ragged' scholar, he was never literally ragged, always appearing in class with whole clothes and a clean face. In seasons of privation he would not go home to dinner, knowing that there was not a crust in the cupboard. Under all trials he manifested no symptoms of discontent; on the contrary, he set a noble example of patient enduring. There came a time when his fortune mended. A number of book-maps were sent to the school to be coloured, and Henry, with his sister, earned nine or ten shillings a week, the money going to their mother. In the mean time Henry made progress in school, and after learning to read, write, and cipher, a situation was procured for him in a City house of business. He was still working his way upwards, when consumption, engendered by early privation, necessitated his removal to Brompton Hospital. The disease was hastened in its progress by a violent cold, which greatly weakened the patient. But if death must come, Henry was fully ready for it. He had found extreme delight in working for his mother, and he also loved the school where he had found refuge in Christ. While lying on a bed of languishing, his heart overflowed with

gratitude for the treatment received, and he declared that everybody behaved to him like a brother or sister. In the last scene of all, with his mother standing by, he departed hence, rejoicing in a good hope through faith.

The London waif, when he prefers living wholly by dishonesty, is a costly thing to the community, and if he be not captured in time, his love of thieving and roving become chronic, and not easily eradicated. In his daily life the neglected child is subject to extremes of fortune, now 'out of luck' and pinched by want, and then, in consequence of a turning tide, regaling himself on steaks, sweets, and muffins, all purchased with the contents of somebody's purse surreptitiously transferred to his possession. Like other people, therefore, the waif has his 'bad' and 'good' times, and though in money matters his procedure is summed up in 'easy come, easy go,' he is neither a selfish nor an unsocial adventurer. He can 'work' alone, or he has no objection to taking a smart counterpart of himself into partnership, and as honour is found even among thieves, he will claim no more than his share of the spoil. Of domestic comfort and of home ties he knows nothing, and, through ignorance, cares less. If a trained thief, it is probable that he was born into the profession, for the fact transpires that persons adopting a thief's life generally enter on their career between the ages of eight and sixteen, few becoming 'professionals' after twenty years of age. Hence some boys might count it their misfortune almost as much as their crime to be thieves. To such the streets are their world, low lodging-houses their home, the gaff, the cheap theatre, and the taproom, their places of recreation. All circumstances in life seem to tell against lads of this class. If they retain any notions of right and wrong, they must survive in their minds by

a God-implanted instinct, in spite of many dark surroundings. How can they be expected to define right and wrong, when the only schools and schoolmasters of their youth have been the streets and their unholiest associations? Though the juvenile vagabond is deficient in his general education, he is well aware that certain offences entail fixed penalties; and because society, in the person of the policeman, marks a bound beyond which he may not pass, he esteems well-dressed people as his natural enemies, and their property as his rightful prey. Beginning badly, he progresses from bad to worse, and unless he be stopped in his course by better schoolmasters, ere he passes the line of manhood, crime becomes a second nature, and if he be reclaimed it will be as by a miracle. Where is social and political economy, when these lowly members of the community are allowed to run to waste? The vine, in whose grapes we delight, will refuse to bring forth rich clusters unless properly trained. We cultivate vines, and neglect what is far more precious—morally responsible creatures. To reclaim a little wanderer may cost a few pounds; but to let him alone will cost hundreds of pounds, and perhaps something else that cannot be redeemed by gold. I have heard of a certain king who, having been well served by a brave general, asked the hero what reward he would choose. To the astonishment of covetous friends, he asked no more than four thousand acres of waste land. This wilderness seemed to be a poor possession, but the waste land did not long continue what it was. A castle sprang up, farms were enclosed, trees were planted, until what was formerly sterile ground bloomed as a fruitful garden, and then the wisdom of the general's choice was manifest. Something like this is going on in London. Devoted men and women choose as their working spheres the moral

wastes of the city, and labour until the desert blossoms into fruitfulness.

The confessions made by the street boy are of value, for from them we discover that love of roving, and of coarse pleasures, frequently occasions irreparable ruin. False notions of life are imbibed, either from companions far gone in crime, or they are suggested by reading the licentious literature which circulates largely among the London poor. Boys especially are carried away by very mistaken ideas respecting the glorious freedom attending an unsettled life, and by wild notions of the delights belonging to seafaring pursuits, and they consequently become dissatisfied with sober work.

A lad of the roving or romantic class, and one who had formerly been a Sunday-school scholar, once addressed his quondam companions from a cell in Chester Castle, taking occasion to depict the events of his downward path. From him we learn the hardships which a viciously inclined youth will endure while yielding to his evil propensities and playing the prodigal. He possessed a good home, and attended school, but both were forsaken. He first wandered to London, but not being quite satisfied with the capital, he started for Birmingham, where he found temporary employment. At Birmingham he was fascinated by the fair and bad company, so that, hearing of another fair at Coventry, he robbed his master, absconded, and having spent his last penny, sold his shoes and clothes, to prevent his dying of starvation on the streets. He was now brought face to face with a stern world, and with the supposed charms of the life he had chosen; but the path he was treading possessed few, if any, of the attractions once fondly pictured. Perhaps he had dreamed of green fields, shady lanes, flowing rivers, and interesting

towns. If so, all things wore a darker aspect than anything he had ever known, and he again set out towards London, a footsore beggar. After wearily walking the long distance, he arrived in the great city a friendless outcast, unknown to a soul, though acquaintances of a kind were sufficiently plentiful. His home now was an iniquitous den in Gray's Inn Lane, the company being gamblers, pickpockets, and others of the same school. No opening now offered itself but the profession of a thief, and lessons in that art were given to make the freshman as perfect as possible. According to the usual course of things, prison life now began, the demoralising discipline of the gaol being administered in terms varying from seven days to two months, according to the crimes committed. On one occasion, when released from Ilford Gaol, he resolved on amending his life, but good resolutions resembled morning dew on the mountain side. He obtained work, entered a more respectable lodging, and might have improved, had not a dissolute companion enticed the partially-reformed thief to scenes of low amusement: these started him afresh on the road to ruin. 'Some people will tell you that there is no harm in going to the play,' he wrote to former schoolfellows, 'but there cannot be any good learned there. Keep from it; pass by it; for this proved my last downfall.' The downward path was now rapid, a committal for ten years for incendiarism effectually stopping further depredations. This boy was not likely to be reformed by prison punishment, but he had been in the Sabbath-school, he remembered the teaching received there, and the gospel message was never entirely effaced from his heart. He had run the course of crime, perceived its folly, and in speaking the language of penitence gave promise of reformation.

Would we know the obstinacy of human nature in adhering to what is bad, we must acquaint ourselves with the conflict against indwelling evil, which even our street Pariahs may experience. There are not wanting among the thieving class those who can respect honour and honesty. One, on being asked why he was happier in an honourable course of life than in the times of old, characteristically replied, 'I can go along the street now, look every peeler in the face, and fear nothing.' Some strongly desire to turn into honest courses; they try and try again, and at last, tearfully confessing defeat, are perhaps taught to conquer by being brought to the strongest of all Friends. A number of instances illustrate what is needed in a teacher, while revealing the peculiar trials of the children. For the following facts we are indebted to one who loved and understood his work, and showed a marvellous perseverance in it.

'Neverfail' was born in a court of West Smithfield, his parents being a young woman and a very old man. The father had once been engaged in trade, but becoming reduced, his wife took in needlework to support the family. With poverty came other evils, and the unfortunate children were left to find their living in the street and their best associates at a ragged-school. 'Neverfail' would have done better had there been any good influence at home to supplement the work of the school; but associating with thieves and wicked characters, he became as bad as the worst. When away from school he cast in his lot with young scamps whose craft consisted in stealing heavy goods from the morning markets, and the nature of these adventures may be judged from the fact that once, while chased by the police, the confederates threw a whole sheep into a dust-bin and escaped. 'Neverfail,' however, was not allowed to remain a

mere parcel-stealer by sharp-witted 'pals:' he inherited talents capable of surprising development. He sat at the feet of a professional thief-trainer, and becoming in time an expert at pocket-picking, won the sobriquet by which he was afterwards recognised. His success astonished all who knew him: he has himself taken between thirty and forty silk handkerchiefs in a day, and when assisted by a companion, he has relieved unsuspecting pedestrians of no less a number than fifty-seven of the same useful articles. But the most cunning expert cannot expect to elude the police for ever, and 'Neverfail' was soon transferred to prison, his first term of punishment extending over twenty-one days. The State thus took possession of the boy, and by means of a proper discipline 'Neverfail' might perhaps have been taught to prefer honesty to theft; but as a matter of fact, the gaol merely gave the graduate in crime an opportunity of completing that education in villany which had begun in the streets. He declared that by going to prison he had learned more relating to the art of thieving than ever he found it possible to gather from trainers or companions outside. When he came out of confinement, his tutor, the trainer, met him at the prison gate, spoke words of encouragement, and reinstated his pupil in the profession of purse-taking. Though successful in a sense, 'Neverfail' was not sufficiently watchful to escape detection and another term in prison. In his own eyes he was a fine gentleman when at large. No ragged boy was he now: he and his 'pals,' one of whom was a woman, dressed elegantly, so that their practices should not be suspected by ordinary passengers.

Some of these lads are never entirely lost sight of by anxious teachers, and after 'Neverfail' had been in gaol thirteen times, an effort to effect a rescue was made. He was once more taken

into school, and raised to the position of monitor, but wearying of the restraint and discipline imposed, he would not return to thieving, but desired to go to sea. In the mean time old companions taunted him, and endeavoured to entice him back into evil courses. They ridiculed him, and showed the spoil they had taken, but 'Neverfail' held out.

One day, as he passed along Cheapside, a question suddenly sounded in his ear, 'Boy, do you want a place?'

'Neverfail' had wandered into Cheapside, to avoid the school, and the words now heard came from a gentleman whose eye happened to detect him in the thronged thoroughfare. The boy's heart at once responded to the kind tone. Yes, he wanted 'a place,' and his teacher would recommend him.

The situation was procured, and now, instead of dressing like a fine gentleman, 'Neverfail' wore the uniform of a house-boy, and his duty was the work proper to that lowly station. One day he was requested to carry some fuel into a certain apartment, where many valuables were lying about: the sight of these stimulated evil propensities, so that only by hurrying away could the quondam thief resist the old inclination to steal. 'Neverfail' strove as best he could against besetting sin, but he never felt comfortable when in the neighbourhood of money and jewels. Whenever he saw articles of value, the tempter was near, urging him to appropriate what could be taken so easily. He was passing through a crisis, and if a Christian adviser had been near, he might have conquered. As it was, a trial came which resembled the last straw which breaks the camel's back. 'Neverfail' could hold out no longer when asked to carry a number of valuables from one part of the premises to another. 'Wait a moment,' he cried, and he left the house, never to return. While

hurrying away he met another boy, whom he directed to apply for 'the place,' emphatically adding, 'Be honest.' The runaway returned to school, to earn a shilling a day by map-colouring, the work having been supplied by a friend. He worked well himself, and brought others who had been thieves or gaol-birds to work with him. Severer trials overtook this tempted child of Adam, and led him again to grieve his patient teacher; for coming to words with the foreman of the work, 'Neverfail' went away, and returned to his old courses of life. He was traced at last to the gallery of the Victoria Theatre. By means of kindness and entreaty he was brought to tears, and he returned to work. Wisdom and kindness suggested that he should be sent to sea, and by this means he was separated from old haunts and powerful tempters. In this instance, the young offender's strivings were aided by the efforts and prayers of a faithful teacher, but the victory was only obtained after a hard struggle.

We do well, then, to regard even the vagrant children as so much good material, capable of being reclaimed and utilised for high purposes. We are not to judge by outward appearances, but to remember that from the gospel standpoint there no longer breathes beneath the broad heavens a real outcast. Sinners, from whom respectability turns aside, gathering up the skirts of its superfine garments, are the special subjects of our Lord's pity, and in them He resolves to magnify His grace. The further the sinner may be from God, the greater the miracle of his conversion; and therefore it becomes us to believe that God will glorify Himself, and show to angels and principalities and powers how divinely He lifts the beggar from the dunghill, and sets him among the princes of the people.

III.

The Day of Small Things.

CHAPTER III.

THE DAY OF SMALL THINGS.

THOUGH they are not alarmists, in the commonly accepted sense, those hard-working philanthropists who are accustomed to the vicissitudes of London life, become sensible of the evils threatening society should the dangerous classes be allowed to remain in the depths of ignorance and vice which until comparatively recent times have been esteemed their unavoidable lot. Lord Shaftesbury is not a pessimist; his lordship is not addicted to taking sensational views of social life, yet the Earl of Shaftesbury has ever assumed a tone of semi-despair while pointing out the needs and woes of London. There is at least something terrible in the fact that vast evil forces are pent up in the crowded area of Whitechapel, Shadwell, Stepney, and Limehouse. What havoc would not these powers commit should they ever, by reason of some unforeseen circumstance, become united, and like a polluting, devastating flood, sweep over the great city. Were they not forces akin to these which London tolerates in her midst, that well-nigh swept civilisation from the face of the Old World; and in modern times these have also turned Paris into a slaughter-house, substituting a reign of terror for liberty. The power of evil is exceedingly great, but

happily that power is not supreme, and if from no other motive than that of self-preservation, Christians, as well as social and political economists, make an effort to raise from their sad condition the ruined and the lost. The Bible inspires confidence and encouragement to those who daily pray God to bless the work. If sovereign mercy would have spared a notoriously wicked city for the sake of ten righteous souls, could these have been found within the fatal boundary, He will surely regard London for the sake of the tens of thousands who in London confess His most holy name. The Church has awakened to a sense of her duty, and never before, since apostolic times, were such well-directed, persevering efforts made to raise the degraded from their low estate. Besides the London City Mission, many volunteer evangelists have selected their own districts, and each of these accomplishes a sum of work which the Day of days alone can declare. These pages relate to one of these volunteers, who has chiefly concerned himself with blessing destitute boys.

Never, probably, had boys generally such desirable opportunities of rising in the world as now; a remark applying to well-to-do lads as well as to those in lowly spheres. There is something grateful in the reflection that no poor wanderer in London can say he has no friend to help him to secure knowledge, and to better his condition. Why should a boy be utterly friendless? Because he is ignorant, ragged, and has not where to sleep at nights? Such misfortunes are a passport to the favour of those kind friends who find their pleasure in doing good, and in restoring waifs to society.

Having lately embraced an opportunity of inspecting the HOME FOR WORKING AND DESTITUTE LADS situated in one of the

most needy districts at the East End, I purpose giving some account of the operations of a mission which, planned, inaugurated, and superintended by Dr. Barnardo, is probably second to no other agency in England as regards general efficiency and success. While there is no lack of energy, there is no waste of force; wisdom goes hand in hand with zeal.

The Home is established in Stepney-causeway, a narrow smoke-grimed street connecting the Commercial-road with Ratcliffe, and hence the base of operations is well selected. I had previously been introduced to Dr. Barnardo at the house of a well-known publishing firm in Paternoster-row, and after this meeting I was naturally desirous of knowing more about the now celebrated boys' friend, and his philanthropic undertakings. A man who can design and establish an agency for rescuing London outcasts, and for starting them respectably in life, must be one whose friendship is worth cultivating, and one about whom the outside world may desire to know something. The genius for Christian enterprise and fine humane instincts of such a man raise him above the majority even of those who are successful Christian pioneers. Dr. Barnardo is a gentleman whose countenance and manners mark him out as being just the kind of man whose aid a needy juvenile would eagerly wish to secure. Himself young, energetic, and of that genial-mindedness so fascinating to youth, the Doctor is completely fitted for his peculiar work, and gloriously has he succeeded in it.

From early life Dr. Barnardo's bent of mind has been towards that most effective kind of philanthropy which seeks to rescue the youth of great cities. If certain geniuses of past days have been poets and historians by birth, here was one who seemed

formed from infancy for a ragged-school teacher. While taking careful observations of life, our friend thought he discovered reason to be dissatisfied with the procedure of the majority of teachers. Those teachers appeared to think their task accomplished when woe-begone juveniles, brought in from the street, were changed into cleanly and orderly boys and girls. The Doctor thought that the conversion of their classes should be the principal aim of all teachers, and that all should work brightened with the hope enjoyed by those who expect great results to spring from their labours. He accustomed himself never to regard any individual child as irreclaimable, however ignorant and unruly he might be; although he had observed teachers swayed by other feelings, as they separated from themselves one black sheep, and then another, as renegades, incorrigible, and hopeless. It did not seem to the Doctor to be becoming in a mere human agent to limit Divine might.

Holding these views, a beginning was made in Stepney during the year 1867. A hired room was opened nightly, the only assistant, as yet, being a man who was a recent convert. There were serious difficulties in the way of progress. All who know what wild natures East-End urchins are when first brought in from their native territory, the gutter and the cellar, will not be surprised to learn that notice to vacate one room after another successively was handed in, the nightly display of juvenile ruffianism being unendurable by the tenants of the cottages; nor can the poor people be heavily censured if they retained any lingering love for peace and domestic enjoyment. The boys were so rough and unruly, that any skilful disciplinarian might have despaired of bringing them into subjection. They even appeared to be ungrateful for the attention paid

them. Their teacher became a target whereat they aimed filthy missiles, and he was greeted by defiant shouts and yells, the disturbance at times culminating in a fight among the assembled youths. This, however, being but the beginning, did not continue. Seeing how their benefactor stood erect among them, with a courage greater than their ingratitude, the lads capitulated to the conquering power of love. The work grew until seven hundred scholars would come together of an evening, and until constables on duty around the school witnessed to the visible improvement in the order of the streets. The Mission extended its borders. Sewing classes, clothing clubs, and other agencies were added to the original school, and half a dozen paid assistants were engaged besides forty voluntary helpers. The work showed a disposition to grow rapidly, one industry after another — brush-making, boot and shoe manufacturing, and wood-chopping—being added to the general programme. At this conjuncture the necessity was first felt of exercising some sort of parental vigilance over reclaimed boys who had attained to positions in which they could earn their own livelihood: a Home for *working* boys, as well as a Refuge for the destitute, was required, and must be provided. Boys who had never realised any domestic joys must be made to know their meaning by tasting their sweetness, and so learn that there were social enjoyments to be found elsewhere than at penny gaffs or at taproom fires. The proposed Home was provided, and at present about one hundred and sixty lads are in possession, the weekly cost of each inmate, inclusive of board, lodging, education, and learning a trade, not exceeding six shillings. It will not be supposed that an institution like this, uniting under one roof so many branches of industry and learning, was reared

without a great exercise of patience and perseverance. The founder refused to contract any kind of debt, even for the sake of poor boys, and hence the workmen employed in making the necessary alterations were discharged more than once when funds were exhausted; but, completed and opened in September, 1870, the buildings now form a social oasis amid the squalor of Stepney-causeway.

IV.

Children Reclaimed.

CHAPTER IV.

CHILDREN RECLAIMED.

WHAT, then, is a faithful ragged-school teacher but a most valuable servant of his country, pledged to do whatever a loving soul, strengthened by prayer, can accomplish in the work of blessing the needy and ignorant? Such are philanthropists of a noble lineage, and whether they be paid or voluntary agents makes little difference, if they have really mastered their profession, and are in love with it. To reclaim no more than one 'Neverfail' might repay for years of toil, and add a jewel to an immortal crown. Teachers are necessarily a self-denying race; but that self-denial has its sure reward, and its mighty stimulus. The ordinary looker-on scans the city's broad moral wastes, and on realising how little has been done, and how much yet remains to be accomplished, he despairs; but the enlightened teacher works on in joy and thankfulness, encouraged for the future by remembering the past. In his eyes evil is not the monarch of the world, but an enemy, invading the domain of a righteous God, and destined ultimately to be cast out with ignominy; therefore the teacher fights on bravely, whatever his immediate success may be.

Model teachers love children as by instinct. Hating only sin,

they are patient and longsuffering with the little sinners, though the opposition of their fallen hearts to the gospel be fierce and prolonged. The trials of such are only known to God and themselves. All children love fun, and this predilection in the roving adventurers of the street sometimes vents itself in so rough a fashion, that the planting of a successful ragged-school is frequently nothing less than a great moral conquest over the juvenile populace of a whole district. What to an unknowing observer would appear as rank insult, is to the wild children harmless frolic, and they at first act like so many untamable creatures, whom none can control. Noise unbounded and riot unlimited often attend the commencement of a school, but the work is none the less hopeful, and assuredly none the less needed, because of this tumult of the adversary. The harder the struggle with their untamed natures, the more complete their final subjugation, and grand victories are those which the gospel wins over the young Philistines of our great city.

In this manner Dr. Barnardo persevered and conquered in Stepney, and others can narrate a similar experience. The teacher who has been a butt for ridicule, and esteemed only as a funny man whom it seemed impossible to ruffle, suddenly assumes a new character before the boys when they voluntarily surrender to his authority. They find him different from what they had supposed, and better than they imagined a man could be, and by-and-by learn to respect him as their one trustworthy earthly friend. Perhaps the young Arab never knew until he met with his new adviser how far it was possible for one human being to befriend another. The teacher becomes his daily counsellor as well as his religious instructor, a sharer of his joys and a sympathiser in his sorrows.

He is a successful worker in the Church who, with a strong and ready hand, can do little things for Christ. Has the reader ever heard of the giant who roamed about the world bewailing his fate, because there was nothing he could find to do worthy of himself? He was conscious of possessing great powers, and he longed for an achievement worthy of his capacity, but knew not what to undertake. It happened that there flowed a river through the country, the waters of which were broad and deep. One day a tiny girl was gathering flowers from the bank, and fell into the flood. The effort of putting forth his great arm and bringing the drowning child to land was scarcely sufficient to establish his reputation, but he performed the humble action, and in doing so felt more satisfaction than if he had slain a thousand men. Henceforth he found his sphere in bearing little ones across the torrent. Have you a giant's power? If you stretch forth your arm, and save but one from the gulf of ignorance and misery, you have not lived in vain; if the sweetness of that one success binds you for ever to the work, happy are you.

Our London waif is the tenant of a little world of his own, the deity of which is 'luck.' Though his opinions on any one subject in life are not very clearly defined, he does not believe that rich people are better than himself. They are merely more 'in luck's way,' and if he can lay hold of a portion of their superfluous wealth, he considers himself to be happy and clever. He entertains crude notions on political economy. He does not quite comprehend what you mean by its being a man's duty to earn his own living, but esteems him 'a flat' who does not get all he can, and how he can. Provided he enjoys enough to eat through the day, and has some kind of a lodging

to lie down in at night, his contentment is no sham, being of a sample which might shame many people far more favoured. Who, while passing along our main thoroughfares, has failed to notice the street boy's flow of spirits? How small an acquisition brings him gladness, and how well-nigh impossible it is to banish his good spirits. To-day he is 'in luck;' the cares of to-morrow are far away, and do not ruffle him or spoil his appetite. Now the tables are turned; he is 'out of luck;' never mind, his chance will come, and he has known darker times. His daily life has its varieties and contrasts. He knows the meaning of trouble while he abides in his wild condition, but he learns that lesson far more fully when he aspires after better things. Taunts, ridicule, and even brutal ill-usage have attended one and another whenever the effort has been made to forsake evil and follow good. Then, indeed, does the enemy threaten and roar. Instances occur of lads who, turning from their old companions, and commencing a new life by joining the Shoeblack Brigade, have had box and bottle broken, and have even been kicked in the face by cowardly fellows. Many ragged boys find it a battle to break away from bad companions; but having left them, and having taken their place among noble spirits, hope leads on, and the idea of retreating is scouted.

Do not the misfortunes of the young and ignorant cry to the strong to come over and help them? and is not their need a more powerful appeal than verbal eloquence? A gentleman while travelling in Ireland encountered a beggar in a most deplorable condition. As the man remained silent, the gentleman said, 'Why, man, if you are in want, why don't you beg?' 'I am begging, your honour,' replied the man. 'Well, but you did not say a word when I passed you,' continued the other. 'Of course

I did not, your honour,' was the reply; 'but see how my skin is crying out through the holes in my trousers, and hark how my bones are crying out from my body. Look on my sunken cheeks, and withered hands and shrunken limbs. Man alive, isn't it begging I am, with a hundred tongues?'

Most trustworthy informants as to their real condition are the boys themselves, and a ready examiner may at all times draw from them information of interest and value. I have been much interested while, for the time being, occupying the post of teacher in a London ragged-school. One week-day afternoon I met with about seventy children who gathered knowledge under one paid teacher, and though the number heavily taxed both the patience and the capacity of the good man, he managed remarkably well, and was complete master of the situation. Order and attention reigned, for the teacher's heart was in the work, and the school was ruled by love, and not by fear. Going up to one class, I gave them a sentence of dictation about the cotton-plant, such as might be taken from any ordinary book, and the readiness shown by several boys was surprising. The spelling was correct and the handwriting good. They next were required to turn to a chapter in the New Testament, and while the forwardest were fluent readers, all were able to read sufficiently well to master the sense. After these exercises, the school generally was questioned on Scripture history, and the answers returned were equally creditable. Then followed arithmetic, with certain puzzling queries, which in the main were also answered satisfactorily. Did the youngsters' knowledge extend further? Were they familiar with the rudiments of geography? They knew a little, and as the tutor with seventy scholars glanced ominously at his mapless walls, he intimated

that his pupils might have done more had all the requisites been at command.

Visits paid to ragged-schools will extend our acquaintance with human nature, and teach us lessons of contentment. In many children there is a greater eagerness to learn than is usual in children of a more favoured lot, and this is peculiarly the case with those who, supporting themselves by their own work, devote their spare hours to school. While working and learning, they are taught to trust in God, and not a few become beautiful examples of this gospel virtue. A little fellow not ten years of age was employed by a lady to sweep snow from the doorstep. Her kind heart pitied the boy's pinched appearance, and her compassion was strongly excited. This lad had a hard life of it, for he supported himself by the labour of his little hands, and braved all weathers. But did he not feel discouraged, and afraid to be alone in this world? The sweeper, outcast though he was, knew nothing of the misgivings suggested by the lady's questions. He had faith, and acted accordingly. 'Don't you think,' he cried, 'that God will take care of a feller if he puts his trust in Him and does the best he can?'

However the case may have been in former days, none who are acquainted with ragged-schools associate crime and dishonesty with a lowly lot, or even with rags; for though the children of the gutter may seem to inherit crime by a dreadful entail, yet, as a matter of fact, many escape the calamity, and deserve double honour and consideration. Give the discipline of kindness instead of the coldness of indifference, or the harsh reproof of the gaol to those who have begun to fall, and their moral ailments are soon healed. A lad is observed as if idling in the street: you pass along, and ask yourself what the young

rascal's object can be. Perhaps you conclude he is looking for a chance to pick pockets, or to lay hands on any plunder which may catch his eye. A more discerning friend than yourself passes, and perceives that he is not a thief, he is hoping to obtain work, and if successful he will appropriate the proceeds to the comforts of a blind mother. Well may any good Samaritan feel anxious to preserve such a boy's spirit of independence; and so the wise benefactor, instead of tendering a pauperizing gift, offers the loan of a shilling. The loan is thankfully accepted, the capital is speedily traded. To that boy that shilling meant a new start in life, he prospered in the use of it, and faithfully returned it according to agreement.

Other welcome traits in the characters of London street waifs are their willingness to be interrogated, and their openness in speaking about themselves. A gentleman while walking home in the evening encountered about a dozen boys, and feeling desirous of pressing the claims of the gospel upon their notice, he did so until tears filled their eyes. He next called on those who loved the Saviour to hold up their hands, and up went a dozen hands immediately. He then explained those words, 'If ye love me, keep my commandments,' afterwards giving to each boy sufficient to procure supper and lodging for the night. A short time afterwards the gentleman was accosted by a delighted shoeblack, whom he recognised as a member of his wayside congregation. As that boy had decided on devoting himself to the service of Christ, some questions were now asked regarding his promise, and he answered emphatically that he had kept his word. He accepted a copy of the New Testament with great delight, and gave ample evidence of conversion by his general conduct.

Teachers who are accomplished in their art readily adapt themselves to circumstances, and become as children for the children's sake. It has been justly said that we do not make fools of ourselves by speaking the language of childhood, but by so doing rather show a mature wisdom. Indeed, the nature which cannot unbend does not understand the wants of children, and it is a mark of genius when persons of the highest attainments excel in the high art of effectively instructing the lowly. A writer in *The Times* once referred to an English premier whose strict etiquette was notorious; yet he would romp on all fours with his little girl, and to make himself more resemble an animal, would cover himself with his wife's shawl. The man who could command the ear of the House of Commons was no less gifted in little things, and the memory of these in after years, when his daughter was no more, is said to have given a sweet satisfaction which the fame of greater deeds could not afford.

Workers among the poor of London are aware that those who accept the gospel manifest deep gratitude to their benefactors. Once persuade them of the value of certain advantages, and that these things can be had for the seeking, and they will eagerly seek them, and display considerable heroism in the pursuit. Who has not witnessed the privation which poor parents undergo for the good of their children, and who has not admired the hardship which youngsters themselves will bear for the sake of maintaining their character in the school? I repeat it, when the poor understand that there is real good in religion, and realise its extreme importance, the calm determination with which they go forward to secure the prize is not a little affecting. My meaning will be made clear by a remarkable circumstance

which happened some years ago in connection with the Royal Ophthalmic Hospital. Two Cornish miners presented themselves at the doors of that valuable institution, making earnest supplication for the relief which they knew could be administered. While one was totally blind, his companion could see a little with one eye. Poor and footsore, they had walked from their distant home, the one who could partially see having guided the other. A strong faith in the power of certain physicians to confer priceless benefits had made those men heroes. What a mixture of hope and fear must have coloured their conversation during their walk from the Land's End! They wanted sight, and hearing of the hospital in London, they pressed forward to obtain it, and richly rewarded indeed they were when they set their faces towards home, with their sight restored. Whoever directed those blind men to the hospital was their life-long benefactor, and much more are those who point young sinners to Jesus, that they may find salvation in Him.

The condition of the class sought to be reached is greatly diversified, and they have to be catered for accordingly. The school may be set up, but the schoolmaster must suit himself to his scholars. Some will be able to attend during the day; others cannot afford so much time, and for these night classes must be instituted. It might be expected that few young persons confined at manual labour during business hours would consent to be taught at night, and yet many are found to be willing to encounter the self-denial. Some will work through a day exceeding twelve hours for a pittance of sixpence or eightpence, and then give their spare hours to their teachers. A valuable adviser indeed may a teacher prove to those whose morning of life is clouded with the sorrows of poverty and sin. The teacher

who excels in his calling will utilize all the knowledge he can command, and will endeavour to advise his constituents in all exigencies. Perhaps his *protégé* has no home, properly speaking, but 'sleeps out' when the lodging-house threepence is not forthcoming. Such have many heart-rending stories to tell. If the youth is a step above the mere outcast, and is in work, his difficulty will often be how to keep body and soul together on the trifle he is able to earn. If his family are respectable, a sick father or a weakly mother may add to the child's perplexities, the lowest depth of all being reached when drink is the bane of his house. Teachers who show this readiness will turn out good scholars—scholars adapted to their calling in life, and imbued with the principles of Christianity; and what higher reward can a man desire? It were as well not to teach at all as to present knowledge in a form which is beyond comprehension. A very learned man who cannot descend to their level is in our waifs' eyes 'a muff,' and is by them so designated. A wise teacher will adapt himself to times and circumstances; his action will tally with that of a certain farmer, who, when complimented on his fat chickens, replied, 'I chops it up small for 'em.'

Of course it will be expected that when children are trained as impostors by natural guardians, impostors will be found among them; but they do not, as a rule, refuse to speak about their tricks. A story is told of a Lord of the Admiralty, who, meeting a ragged urchin in the streets of Worcester, inquired of the boy where he lived. The latter replied that he did not live anywhere. 'Where are your father and mother?' continued the gentleman. 'Never had any, as I knows of,' replied the urchin. 'How do you live?' was still asked. 'Why,' said the

other, 'I begs when people gives me anything, and when they won't, I steals.' What candour could surpass this?

Imposture is not difficult of detection, and once detected, we should beware of affording encouragement to that detestable vice. I would not be misunderstood. The young vagabond who does nothing more than play pitch-and-toss, romp, and steal, is not an impostor in the sense now intended. He does not entirely live a lie, for he makes no secret of his depredations before any who choose to converse with him. There are others, however, who are trained to a life of infamous imposture, and the chief hindrance to their reformation is the encouragement accorded by a mistaken public. An example may be quoted in the foreign boy, who carries an English begging petition he cannot read, the purport of which is that the bearer has recently embraced Christianity. The 'sailor dodge' is another favourite scheme with this fraternity: flaming pictures of fire, tempest, and shipwreck, sufficing to draw forth a harvest of coppers. Perhaps more successful still is the 'cripple,' whose chief appeal to sympathy centres in an ulcerated leg. What a picture of dejection and woe the creature looks, for as you drop a trifle into the hat held out with tremulous hand, he seems to have scarce strength enough to mutter any thanks, if he even deigns to make such an attempt. In him, at any rate, you think you have really found the personification of despair. Still, however, it may comfort you to know that so far as money is concerned the 'cripple' is not very badly off. As the live-long day passes, one and then another replenish the hat, until by sunset, or by the time when he chooses to retire, he possesses a good round sum. Should your pitying eye happen to be near when he rises to depart homewards, you might learn

something in the course of five minutes—a lesson calculated to modify your opinion of beggars for the rest of your life. See the 'cripple' gather together his writing materials, and uneasily hobble away as if in pain. Then he halts, leers this way and that way, so as to be sure that no 'soft tommies' are taking notes of his movements. Meanwhile, his back suddenly grows straight, the 'sore' is removed from the leg, carefully pocketed for future use, and away goes Mr. 'Cripple' at a brisk pace towards some beggars' rendezvous, where he will take stock of his 'baggings,' replace his rags by a suit of comfortable clothes, fare sumptuously, and spend the rest of the night in riot and sensual amusements. The children of such characters are not likely to make truth a matter of very great consideration, and if they lie and steal, who can wonder?

I will now point out one or two special evil influences to which waifs of the street are exposed, and from the power of which legislation might partially protect them. No sooner have these children learned to read than an enemy appears in the pernicious literature which, though grossly immoral, is written so as to elude Lord Campbell's Act. It is believed by those who are in a position to judge, that the licentious press has slightly amended its ways during the last fifteen years: be this as it may, the traffic is still extensive, and the worst part of the business is that the poison is reaching the children. There are several grades of this demoralising reading, and the whole taken together represents a stupendous evil, whose moral blight reaches far beyond the habitations of the poor. The worst samples are those of the 'Holywell-street' type, and these vile prints will continue to be vended so long as depraved readers, with money in their pockets, demand a supply. The obscene

books of this class are not, however, provided for the poor, many of the most objectionable being sold at prices such as happily place them far beyond the reach of humble people. Next come the serial tales and song-books, which Acts of Parliament do not suppress. As the offspring of depraved minds, these also pander to a corrupt taste, but can only be counteracted by something purer provided in their place. Ordinary newsvendors and booksellers do not usually trade in these productions, but back-street little shops, the staple of whose traffic is bacon, tobacco, and grocery wares, eke out their income by distributing moral poison among the youth of the neighbourhood. Little girls who admire what is dashing and romantic, and boys who seek to excel in deeds of chivalry, revel in this low trash, and their danger calls loudly on all teachers to superintend the reading of their scholars. Another class of serial, and in literary merit raised high above those mentioned, it were superfluous to speak about at length. They are not openly immoral, but they are sensational, and their moral influence is objectionable. They enervate the intellect, generating a taste for what is unhealthy and exciting. A vast capital is embarked in these productions, and the Church, in some instances, is unsuccessfully endeavouring to counteract sensationalism by sensationalism. There is only one way of meeting the encroachments of a corrupt press —provide what is pure and attractive. Teachers should also, as far as lies in their power, overlook what their scholars read. The united action of every voluntary and paid teacher would ensure wonderful results.

Even more baneful in its effects than street literature is that chief among moral curses, the penny gaff. The penny gaff is an institution specially provided for street Arabs, and includes an

educational apparatus befitting a devils' school, where moral defilement without stint may be imbibed. Did neglected children pass all other ordeals without coming to grief, they would surely be wrecked in a place which has all the worst features of the low theatre, without one redeeming quality. The houses are kept by illiterate poltroons, who have neither feeling nor principle, being as heartless as they are ignorant. Religion is blasphemed without blush, the actors affecting to laugh at morality, while honesty is ridiculed as effeminate. The heroes held up to admiration are lawless desperadoes, who, if they suffered just punishment, are represented as having suffered legalised martyrdom. What is nightly to be seen in such places it were indelicate to depict, but thus much may be revealed—the people who arrange the programme take care that the bill of fare shall be replete with what is villanously obscene. Once entangled in the meshes of this enemy, a child is morally lost, for when robbery is extolled as chivalrous, and consideration for female honour is shown to be weak-minded, what youth can be expected to escape contamination, or to shun stealing money for sensual indulgence? Bad results at once show themselves in those who frequent the gaff, dismission from respectable service being one of the first-fruits of a child's love for low pleasures. What, however, cares Mr. Gaff-keeper for consequences? On becoming a thief a boy or a girl is more likely than ever to relish the abominations provided, and Mr. Gaff-keeper's anxiety only extends to his pocket. The gaff as it now exists in London is a school for rogues, and strongly stimulates the worst passions of the young. Being of this character, these pest-houses should be dealt with by the State according to their deserts, for while we cannot make good citizens by Act of Parliament, we can do much to preserve youth

from demoralisation. We cannot cure disease by government edicts, but we can enact proper sanitary measures for preserving the healthy.

Of the baneful influence of the penny gaff, the waif himself is a trustworthy witness. Some years ago an urchin named James Anderson was arraigned before a London magistrate for robbing a till. Stealthily did the infantile rascal creep into the shop, put his tiny hand into the drawer and carry away the coins, four shillings having been found on him when arrested. The father of the thief attended to explain his son's antecedents. James had taken to frequenting a gaff in the Euston-road, and neither scolding nor beating produced any deterrent effect. After the magistrate had listened to the explanation, the following dialogue ensued :—

Magistrate. Who told you to go to that place ?

Boy. No one, sir. I went with another boy, a cripple. I have been there about six times.

Magistrate. Were there many people there when you went ?

Boy. Yes, sir; it was always crowded.

Magistrate. And what did you see there ?

Boy. Oh, they give us about three songs; then there's some actin'; then they puts down the blind, and that's all you see.

Magistrate. What kind of acting was it ?

Boy. Oh, murderin' and that !

As opposed to this immoral teaching, notice how the discipline of the school draws out the best traits in the character. Do we talk of chivalry ? There are many noble-spirited fellows among street waifs who only need help to enable them to earn our admiration. During a ragged-school summer excursion, a little girl lost her railway ticket, and could not pass the barrier.

A boy who saw her crying gave up his ticket. Another boy, on hearing of the occurrence, copied his example, for one more girl was found in a similar predicament. Those boys walked to London, a dozen miles, and thereby performed a deed of which any real gentleman would be proud. Such rough diamonds should not be allowed to lie in the mire, to be ruined by the immoral novel, or by the still viler penny gaff.

Work among juveniles in London has its bright side, though so much remains to be done that, were not God with the workers, they might hang down their feeble arms in despair. English charity is frequently extolled both by tongue and pen, but we might ask, Does England fully appreciate the responsibility of her position? We know what the condition of the outcast classes is, and we also know that if the better part of the nation were to determine that ignorance and crime should no longer stain our national name, many appalling evils would speedily come to an end. Is it too true that the selfish and the prosperous are occupied with present enjoyment, and are sadly deaf to the cry of the outcast and the perishing? Philanthropic workers have been taught by experience not to look too hopefully to the rich for succour, and they have also to lament that the majority of those who support the good cause do not give in proportion to their means or professions of zeal. If those blessed with abundance were to make out a yearly balance-sheet of what they have received and of what they have dispensed, they would be both surprised and ashamed. Usually the needy seldom find friends among those far removed from them by luxury and ease; but God has ordained that a great duty should have attached to it a great promise—'Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will deliver him in time of trouble.'

V.

The Home for Working and Destitute Boys.

CHAPTER V.

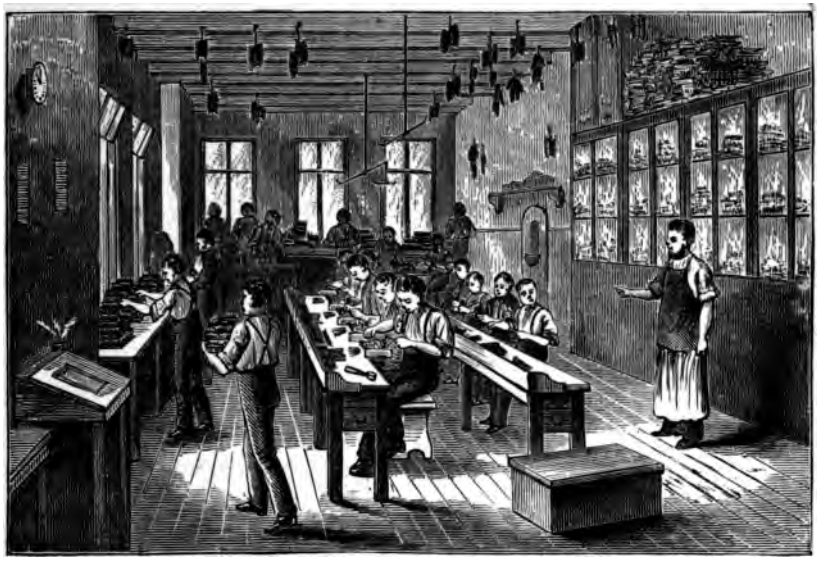
THE HOME FOR WORKING AND DESTITUTE BOYS.

HAVING, in the preceding pages, explained a few preliminary matters, I shall now ask the reader to accompany me in a tour of inspection over the Home for Working and Destitute Boys, that institution representing the main object of Dr. Barnardo's solicitude, and the one which has earned for its founder a popular name in England.

It is not every Londoner who happens to be quite familiar with the locality of Stepney-causeway and its tributaries; and hence our friends, the managers of the institution, who have stationed themselves on what is to many *terra incognita*, consider a special card of instructions to be necessary, and accordingly this is issued. We are told 'How to get to the Home,' and have a choice of conveyance between train, omnibus, or tramway; but, being more completely familiar with the intricacies of London bye-ways than mere novices, the site is reached without difficulty. The Home is found diffusing its blessings among a poverty-stricken populace, like a lighthouse set upon the rocks where wrecks are most frequent, or a refuge on an Alpine pass where travellers most abound, and dangers are most thickly strewn.

We have now arrived at Nos. 18 and 20, Stepney-causeway. Passing the folding-doors, we enter a comfortable entrance-hall, the domain of a young one-armed doorkeeper, who politely receives inquisitive visitors, and allows them a place by his fire. There are seats, and but little other furniture, though the coloured glass lamp, and 'the shadows from the fitful firelight,' suffice to make the interior a comfortable contrast to the gloom reigning without. Dr. Barnardo not having yet arrived, his representative invites us into an inner office, where the accounts of this industrial hive are kept. There are plentiful signs of letter-writing, book-keeping, and invoice-making, commercial work which will be understood when it is remembered that the Home is a trading concern of growing magnitude and importance. Above stairs there are numbers of little artisans at work—tailors, brushmakers, and bootmakers,—the trade now carried on representing several thousands sterling annually. The institutional clerk who thrives in this counting-house is obligingly communicative with his tongue, as well as commendably active with his pen, and so contributes his information with tact and goodwill.

Now the quick step of Dr. Barnardo is heard, who is the general or the superintending genius of this entire institution, as will be quickly inferred from the accumulated questions and applications to which he is required to give attention. These inquiries are of various kinds, relating to trade or to individual suffering or sorrow. See there, for example: there stands a boy who declares he has 'tramped' from Plymouth, in consequence of having been thrown out of employment by a strike among the workpeople. There is an air of truth about the story which ensures his being believed. He is homeless and destitute,



BRUSH-MAKING.

See page 58.

TAILORING.

See page 58.

BOOT-MAKING.

See pag

and not an impostor. That poor fellow can be no London sharper, since his features still retain the expression of the good-natured, not over-bright, Devonshire peasant. His look of rustic inexperience is rather out of keeping with what we are usually accustomed to encounter in Stepney-causeway. Let us hope that, starting afresh in the right direction, as he seems disposed to do, he may yet see better days.

The Home for Working and Destitute Lads is the head-quarters of the East London Juvenile Mission, an organisation of considerable magnitude, which also extends its influence to adults—four houses at Hope-place, World's-end, Stepney, being used as a mission-hall and school-rooms. The premises in Stepney-causeway are emphatically what their name implies, a Home for working as well as destitute boys. In Carr-street, Limehouse, two houses are used as a laundry and workrooms. At Rhodewell Wharf, hard by, the wood-chopping brigade flourishes, two thousand pounds representing the value of material in stock. In Salmon's-lane, Limehouse, are the Ragged-schools, while in North-street is the Tract and Pure Literature Dépôt. The most extraordinary house, however, is 'The Edinburgh Castle,' or 'British Workman,' of which I shall say something by-and-by. It will now devolve upon us to walk over the Home, and then, as succinctly as possible, to explain the origin of this green spot in the metropolitan wilderness.

The Home, as it now stands, is rather more than three years old, though the labours of Dr. Barnardo among the poor of London commenced in 1867. The whole mission has risen very rapidly, and is now, and has ever been, free from debt. So scrupulously careful is the Doctor to obey the scriptural injunction, *owe no man anything*, that the workmen engaged in altering the building

into its present shape were several times discharged for want of funds, and taken on again when money replenished the coffers of the institution.

Sitting before the office fire at the Home, and knowing something of the proportions to which that work has now attained, one is tempted to make calculations regarding the future. To what boundary will the operations of this mission ultimately extend? The Doctor, who occupies a chair on the opposite side of the fire, is agreeably communicative, and has besides a novel experience to talk about. Since the date of his first midnight excursion into the precincts of Rag Fair, he has seen more of low life in the metropolis, under its more saddening and repulsive phases, than perhaps any other living philanthropist. So well known is he now among those whom he seeks to reach, that he can walk about localities with impunity where the licentious riot, and where crime holds sovereign sway. Not that this has always been the case. Our friend had to pay the penalties of a rough apprenticeship, having been subjected to violent treatment on more than one occasion. Though he may have bought his experience dear, if he cared to reckon up what the total cost, it is yet a valuable experience. His eyes and ears are now so well disciplined, that instinctively, as it were, he detects a true or a false tongue, while hands trained for thieving cannot escape his scrutiny.

Concerning the Home itself, I was glad to learn that the first subscription received towards providing this boon to the poor came from a servant-girl, and consisted of twenty-four farthings! There was also an adventure, besides the one in Rag Fair, which probably urged on our friend to lay the foundations of this institution. He was once called upon to visit a lad prostrated by

fever, one who paid seven out of the eight shillings he earned weekly for board and lodging. Destitute of comfort, and covered with filth, the boy's only chance of recovery depended, humanly speaking, on his immediate removal to a hospital. There were, however, difficulties in the way. Mrs. Landlady, fearing contagion less than loss of rent, refused to allow her tenant to go away in his clothes, and thus the patient was necessarily removed wrapped in a coat which Dr. Barnardo took from his own back for the purpose!

Here I may also tell the story of the sad fate of 'Little Carrots,' a waif who came under Dr. Barnardo's notice. 'Carrots' was a roving Arab, who was found dead in a barrel in the street, one fine spring morning not long ago. Shortly before, this unfortunate child stood among more than seventy others who emerged from beneath a tarpauling near the river-side, and he then begged very earnestly to be allowed to accompany five others to the Home at Stepney. Because every bed was occupied, 'Carrots' could not be taken in. During four years of his life, or from the age of seven to that of eleven, 'Carrots' battled with the world without any friend besides God; but while striving to live honestly, his little hands were not always equal to doing more than provide food alone. It was not every night that he could afford to indulge in a lodging. It is true 'Carrots' had a mother, a kind of female fiend, who robbed her child of whatever he possessed, whenever she chanced to catch him. Circumstances were so entirely against 'Little Carrots,' that he could not continue the struggle for life, and so quietly died, to reproach those who neglected him, far more poignantly by his hunger-pinched face as it appeared in death, than ever he had done by any complaints in life. There was at least one satis-

factory thing about this occurrence: a group of sincere mourners gathered round the little sufferer's bier. A kind-hearted policeman carried the corpse into a neighbouring tavern, and many who had shared his cruel hardships were found shedding tears over his lifeless form.

Leaving our seat by the office fire, we walk through the various departments of the establishment, every room being as cleanly kept as the decks and cabins of any ship in her Majesty's navy. The upper story is the sleeping-quarters of those boys who are yet in the earliest stages of reformation, fresh importations from the gutter. These must not be lifted up too suddenly, or their expectations will be raised too high. Hence, while each is apportioned a separate bed, the lads who sleep here have not yet sufficiently advanced to command what some regard as the commonplace, every-day comfort of sheets and their usual concomitants. Each lies on an iron bedstead, with a hammock instead of a mattress, and is content to wrap himself in a coarse, warm, horse-cloth kind of blanket. Each row of little bedsteads has one of a superior kind for the accommodation of a monitor; and monitors, as persons who have already attained to something worthy in life, and as partially independent artisans, have feather beds, pillows, and sheets, in accordance with the latest suggestions of civilisation. Beneath every bedstead stands an iron clothes-basket, and at the head is a bracket for holding a Bible. In the lower story the furnishing arrangements are very similar, the chief difference being that the beds are of a slightly superior description. A boy who sleeps in the lower story has conquered some difficulties, has risen, and is rising in life. He still attends school, but he also occupies a place in one of the *workshops,* where he earns not less than five shillings weekly.

Thus, under an admirable management, no boy is either pampered or pauperised: on the contrary, all are prompted to work for what others have won. Other boys enjoy privileges which all may win by industry and good conduct. All the inmates have daily before their eyes the examples of those in the wake of whose advancement they are expected to follow. The motto all must honour is, LABOR OMNIA VINCIT.

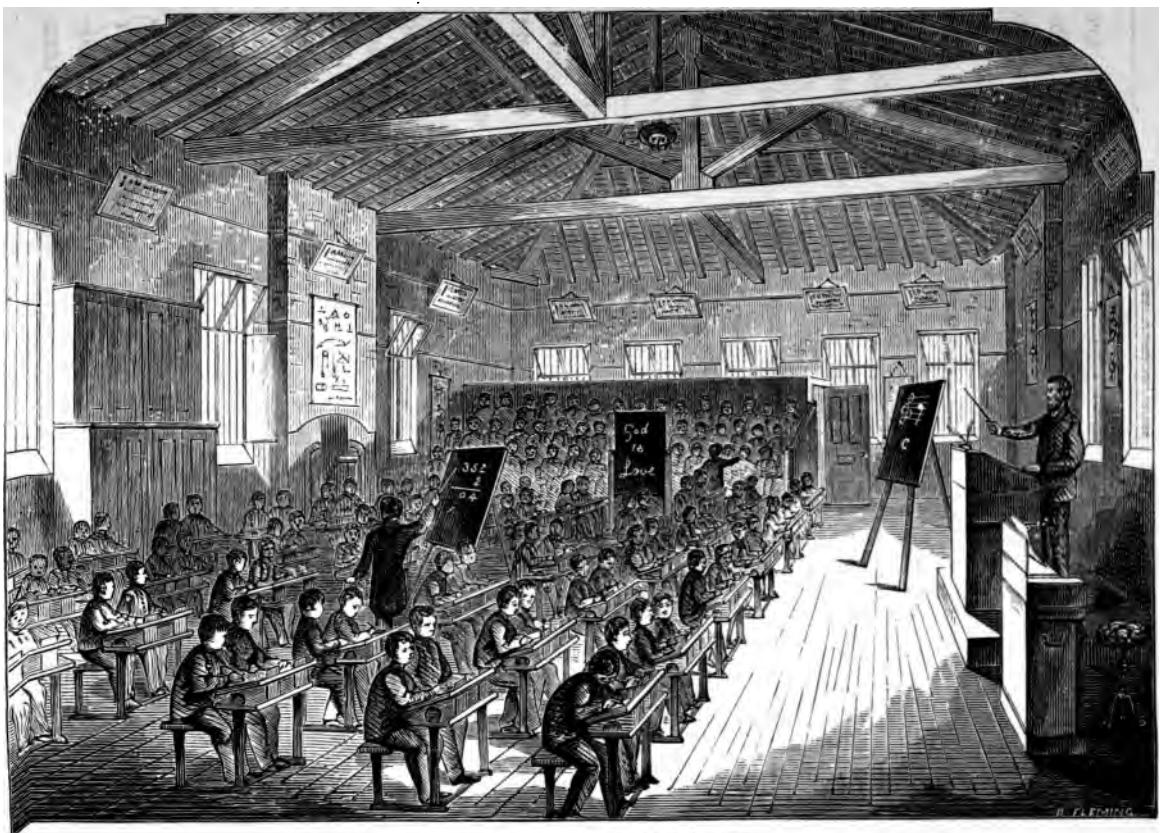
From the dormitories we adjourn to the workshops. The tailors occupy one room, and the bootmakers another; but most interesting are the brushmakers, who constitute a larger department. It is gratifying to see busy lads cheerfully submitting to competent industrial tuition, and to remark that the brushes and boots produced are not inferior to the best town-made goods, as any may prove to their satisfaction who choose to encourage the Mission by ordering articles from the Home. While casual visitors look on admiringly, they may imagine themselves to be standing in the well-ordered workshop of a wholesale manufacturer: they will only with difficulty realise that all these lads have been rescued from vice, poverty, and crime; that only a few months, and in many instances only a few weeks ago, they were wandering about London without aim or purpose.

Nothing more strikingly illustrates the power of Christian discipline than the voluntary subjection to one will of a number of lads who have been accustomed to that rough kind of freedom belonging to the children of the streets in London. There are some of these young creatures who will not bend to any authority, however winsome; but those who do make an honourable surrender, often become the best of servants and the most trustworthy of friends. To any who see them, and who remember what these boys were before they entered the Home, their general

behaviour will prove really surprising. Moral forces alone are used by the superintendents, and these are found to be sufficiently potent to gain the end desired. It is among such characters, and by bringing them from their native darkness into the marvellous light of the gospel, that the grace of God achieves its grandest earthly triumphs.

There are not wanting, among the lads, countenances adorned with regularly-formed, handsome features, and bespeaking a quick intelligence. The portraits of three well-favoured youths adorned the walls of the Royal Academy during a recent exhibition. Another pleasing feature of the Home is the unmistakable bond of cordial friendship which unites Dr. Barnardo to his young constituents. He does not move about among them with any official air, but ties of real love unite him to the youthful hearts placed under his charge. He is free alike from the affectation of dignity and from undue familiarity. The Doctor has a friend's salute for every lad whose eyes meet his own, and each little artisan responds with a smile, or speaks unrestrainedly. Never were a philanthropist and his charge more thoroughly in each other's confidence, and coming years will certainly foster the gratitude now existing in each young heart—gratitude to that overruling Providence which sent a helping hand when no friend was in sight, and when life's sole outlook was a starless night of despair.

We now pass from the industrial department to the schoolroom, which is equally to our mind. May these poor little fellows live to appreciate the knowledge now imparted to them. It must be remembered that as the average stay of each scholar in the Home is less than a year, the educational term is exceedingly brief; but yet, judging from appearances, the boys turn



THE SCHOOL-ROOM OF THE BOYS' HOME.

See page 64.

their time to good account, as if aware of their advantages and disadvantages. Some enter the house with no school knowledge whatever, though with ample stores of knowledge of another kind, which it were well for them if they could forget. At the best, the little learning possessed by the more advanced, unless in exceptional cases, is only such as a ragged-school usually supplies. Notwithstanding, there is work done here which would not bring discredit on a high-class academy. Take up the writing-books, and the penmanship in many of them will call forth encomiums, while the exercises in mental arithmetic, with a rehearsal of which we were entertained, would do credit to any ordinary commercial school. As he walked about, the Doctor appeared to be quite familiar with each boy's temperament and abilities. One youngster is pointed out, and we learn confidentially that he has brains! Brains, has he? Well, to be sure, the physique of the head might strike an anatomist, after a careful inspection, as being of a vulgar cast; but look again. The brow is intellectually formed, and the adroitness characterising the boy's answers to some intricate exercises in mental arithmetic show an uncommon expertness in calculation. Standing close by the last-named genius is another lad, who has lately lost an eye, a stone having been thrown at him through a window. Though he has not been an inmate of the Home more than a few days, he is already old in experience. He can relate particulars of a career of wild adventure and reckless crime such as we should not expect often to find paralleled in one so young. Poor boy! With one eye entirely gone, and with the remaining organ weakened until it aches with use, his case is indeed deplorable; but his misfortunes, like those of many others of his class, had their spring in the drinking habits of those who should have

been his protectors. The wonder is not that the boy lost an eye, but rather that life itself was preserved. And yet how complete has been this child's training! He has had careful and skilful schoolmasters. Just for curiosity's sake, look at his hands: they are small, well-formed, soft, and he has been trained to twist them into any form at pleasure. The hands alone would tell you, even if the fact were denied, that the urchin is a graduate of a thieves' university. A turning-point occurred in his life when that unknown hand aimed the eye-destroying stone, for the boy is now on the road to something better than he had ever known before.

Many unpalatable truths force themselves upon the labourers in a children's mission among the destitute. Many of those whom we in London call gutter-children are the offspring of parents who are apparently the irreclaimable slaves of a sottish selfishness, for you vainly seek to reach their hearts by Christian kindness, or to excite their fears by judicial threats. Every trait which imparts dignity to humanity, indeed, everything that has no kinship with the powers of darkness, seems to have been long ago obliterated from their nature by the enemy who has entered in and taken possession of their being. Look yonder, and what do you see? Separated from the other boys, motionless, listless, and not required to engage himself with any kind of exercises, is seated a singular-looking child, not clothed in the comfortable uniform of the school, but still retaining his native rags. As you inspect this juvenile phenomenon, with an involuntary shudder of disgust, your look of inquiry silently asks for an explanation. That child has been reduced into a condition of semi-idiocy by want, exposure, and a father's brutality. The guilty man, who is still living, is a drunken profligate. He

is in regular work, by which he earns a guinea a week. Until recently, father and son lived together in a squalid room, and nightly, on coming home intoxicated, the man would beat the little fellow most savagely with a strap, prior to turning him naked into the street! The child would then sit, terrified and cowering, on the door-step, shivering in the chill night air until such time as he supposed his father had settled down into quietness; and then he would creep back to the heap of rags serving for a bed, and lie down, to awake to new miseries in the morning. Whether or not such a victim can be lastingly benefited, or whether reason has been extinguished by the fiendish hand of an unnatural parent, has yet to be proved, the admission of the case being so recent. The indignant reader will say that a man guilty of such crimes should be severely punished; but there are obstacles in the way of justice. Because the law is not strong enough to grasp such wretches, and to remove them once for all from the social arena, not one of the people who supplied our information dare think of entering a law-court to testify against the criminal. They would be risking their lives by doing so! What! the reader may exclaim, relieve a miscreant of his son, and allow him a more ample opportunity of pandering to vicious propensities! Nay, the man is not encouraged in iniquitous indulgences by having his son removed. When the boy lived at home, he did not have sixpence a week expended upon him, so that the father will have no more money than formerly to squander upon himself. It is, indeed, shocking to discover how like to devils men may become through self-indulgence. The boy sitting there, solitary and motionless, appears to have had all that is human beaten and kicked out of him, his habits being so nearly those of an animal, that new

clothes cannot be given him until an improvement in behaviour takes place. Yet there is hope! The leaden-looking features actually brightened at the mention of 'new clothes,' and he seemed also to dimly comprehend the conditions laid down. May the forlorn outcast be speedily brought to reason and to God.*

Before leaving the school-room it may be mentioned that the institution includes an excellent playground, the freedom and frolic enjoyed therein being of a most healthy kind. By way of further indulgence, the boys are allowed to keep pet birds and animals, and by such means their natures are refined, while their knowledge is extended by reading lessons of kindness.

* Since writing the above I have been glad to learn that the child in question has already greatly improved, both in his habits and intelligence. Though received into the Home in a semi-idiotic state, he now promises to become a useful member of society.

VI.

Dr. Barnardo's First Arab.

CHAPTER VI.

DR. BARNARDO'S FIRST ARAB.

HAVING begun a royal work in a very modest manner, Dr. Barnardo had faith to expect large results. Christian work, most richly blessed of God, has usually been inaugurated without noise or parade, because now, as of old, the kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation. Mr. Orsman chose Golden-lane as the site of his labours, when his resources were a Bible and a bundle of tracts, and we now see to what his work has grown. Even the London City Mission was first formed by humble agents in a poor house at Islington, but to-day this Institution is one of the grandest evangelistic powers the world has ever seen. Divine wisdom teaches us not to despise the day of small things, and they who do so, while sowing the seed of the Kingdom, are not likely ever to reap golden sheaves for the Master's use.

It will now be necessary again to revert to the early days of Dr. Barnardo's experience, and to tell a story which is closely connected with subsequent success.

The narrative is a straightforward story sufficiently singular to excite popular interest. As the river may have a very little spring, and one that seems to be inadequate to account for its subsequent volume, so this East-End Juvenile Mission was

suggested by one boy's experience. Dr. Barnardo is not slow at taking hints, and a hint most fruitful in results came to him from a lad in a ragged class. During some years our friend endeavoured, not in vain, to fathom the depths of juvenile ignorance and wretchedness in London, and he might have still held the delusion that he knew all the truth, had not a homeless child unconsciously corrected his notions, and turned his thoughts into a new channel.

During three years previous to the adventure in question, Dr. Barnardo laboured among the dens of Stepney as a ragged-school teacher in his own way. Bible in hand, he sought out the most needy waifs and strays, conquered difficulties, and perfectly acquainted himself, as he supposed, with the every-day woes and wants of the indigent classes. He was destined to become further enlightened in an effective, because striking manner.

This is how it happened. One winter evening the Doctor was engaged with his accustomed work in teaching: he had dismissed the classes, and was ready to close the doors for that night, when he noticed one loitering in the room, and evincing an evident unwillingness to depart. The loiterer was a youth with rather a knowing expression on his features, and he seemed to possess a desire after knowledge not always seen in one of his character and condition. But why did he linger? It was time for closing the doors; he must go home; it was growing late, and mother would certainly be anxious. Though not deaf to these representations, the Arab parried his teacher's arguments, and craved permission, in urgent tones, to remain in that warm room. As if discerning something in the pleader's eyes, or hearing something in the tones of his voice more

affecting than usual, the teacher's manner became less peremptory towards the boy. He continued to be kindly urgent, however. His little friend would be better at home, and it would be well not to frighten friends and relatives. But what is it the waif says? He has no mother to expect him! Where does he live then? Nowhere! What an improbable story! Surely the youngster must be an adept at deceit; he must be making attempts to excite pity by retailing lies. At any rate the case was worthy of being inquired into.

The teacher had hitherto flattered himself that he knew the depths of London ignorance and depravity: one more correctly informed stood there, who would be able to convict an educated gentleman of misjudgment before the dawn of morning. That boy had not gathered his knowledge from books; he had not gone to this place and to that to pick up superficial facts to garnish fancy pictures of 'life.' His knowledge was the result of a dread experience. That keen-witted lad, lingering there in rags, old beyond his years, with the expression of a suffering man on his hunger-pinched boyish features, was familiar with the subject he spoke about as he was familiar with no other kind of knowledge. Happening to have no home himself, he would, if teacher wished, enlighten him concerning numbers of others whose only nightly shelter was the sky! During the preceding night he had lain in a cart at Whitechapel; but as the wind was bitingly cold, he should like to lie in that warm room until morning. He would be careful not to do any injury.

That story, then, was no subterfuge; there was truth in it. Sad thoughts entered the teacher's mind as he reflected on the case, and realised for the first time that the object before him was no more than a sample of many others who roamed about

the streets in a state of similar destitution. Were there really others like that lad, without either home or friends, without even a hovel to sleep in? Ay, there were indeed; there were more than could well be counted, so the lad said. Now, wishing, from purely philanthropic motives, to become more perfectly acquainted with the mysteries of boy-life in London, the teacher then and there proposed and concluded a bargain with the knowing and communicative Arab. In return for certain valued considerations—hot coffee and its usual accompaniments, and a warm place to lie down in—the said wanderer should agree to point out the sleeping-places of others who had no home.

The outcast, who was thus unwittingly rendering the metropolitan boy-world an immense service by the information he was communicating, accompanied his new-found friend home; and when cheered anew into talkativeness by the hospitality dispensed, he detailed fresh particulars of his individual history. Never having seen his father, he could still remember that his mother was a weakly, ailing body, who, when she died, left him no home but the streets. Reduced to straits, he became the *employé* of one 'Swearin' Dick,' a lighterman, the principal wages received being represented by kicks and general ill-treatment. Running away from the barge, the streets were all before him where to choose, and the police his watchful guardians and tormentors. It was after a long course of ill-fortune in the winter weather that he found his way into the ragged-school. The most horrid remembrances of his young life carried Jem back to days when his home was the lighterman's barge on the Thames—that floating hell with a demon for its master. The wretch's raving blasphemy seemed still to rudely assail the child's unwilling ears, as he called to mind how the powerful

river-man's cowardly fist had often been aimed at the head of the weak and helpless. No wonder if all that was wicked and odious in the world was somehow or other associated by little Jem with 'Swearin' Dick.'

After listening to this story, the teacher put new thoughts into Jem's mind. Something was said to him about a home, where Jem would be provided with work, schooling, and enough of wholesome food. Then Jem must remember that there was another world to think about. Yes, to be sure there was. Jem had heard about that place; that place was heaven, was it not? Well, under certain conditions, he should like to go there; the conditions being that heaven should be free from the presence of policemen and 'Swearin' Dick.' When the gospel was more fully explained to him, Jem seemed quite pleased, asking such questions as could only come from simple but inquisitive ignorance. He greatly wondered why the police did not interfere at the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, while he pronounced the Jews to have been more cruel than even his old foe, the lighterman. His views became clearer as he was further instructed in the sacred story, and was helped by loving, earnest prayer.

The projected nocturnal ramble now loomed in the foreground. The hour of midnight had already chimed. As if the warmth and refreshment had animated him with new life, Jem was still cheerful and talkative; a fortunate circumstance, when his companion was anxious to extend his knowledge of life, and of life's hardships in their severer forms.

The teacher and his guide, equipped for their nocturnal adventure, directed their course towards the City. Leaving the broad highway of Whitechapel, they turned down Houndsditch, and when within a few yards of Bishopsgate Church, they turned

again down an alley, and there, when not more than a stone's throw from the now desolate Devonshire-square Chapel, they reached the not-very-well-known Exchange of the rag-world—a world in itself, though hidden from the eyes of respectable London. Rag-fair is a world retaining peculiar customs. To hear its noise and to see its bustle, one needs to visit the ground during the Sabbath forenoon, but at 1 a.m., when our amateur social explorer stood upon the pavement of Petticoat-lane, the place was pervaded by an ominous stillness. The frouzy, ill-looking, cramped-up little shops are at such an untimely hour barred and bolted, it being the business of the natives to tempt thieves by day in a very different manner from those who tempt them to enter at night by leaving their doors and windows with insecure fastenings. Is it to such an uninviting territory that the homeless slink away to escape the policeman's scrutiny, and to find hole or corner for shelter? Though somewhat incredulous, the teacher nevertheless follows Jem, who, taking a circuitous route, now arrives at the outside of the Exchange, and then climbs on to the dome-shaped roof of the same, there to discover—what? *Asleep in the chill night air, without covering of any kind between them and the clouds, lay eleven boys insufficiently clad in a few rags!* Jem's account, then, was true; there were more than he could count who had no better bed-chamber than a roof or a doorstep! Poor Jem! he probably little understood the horror and amazement which sat on his companion's face. It would seem quite natural to Jem for a boy to 'sleep out' if he happened not to have threepence wherewith to pass him to a lodging. The lad volunteered to discover other similar retreats; but one may become so heart-sick and appalled by a single genuine sample of misery, as to refuse to see more. It was so

with our venturesome ragged-school teacher. He had at one glance taken in as much as flesh and blood could bear; and he had seen enough to occasion his forming the resolution that he would devote life and energy to the work of benefiting homeless boys. That resolution has been faithfully acted upon. Dr. Barnardo has had grace given him to persevere in his noble course, though tempting paths are open to a man of his education and ability. Hence hundreds of lads whose homes were the hard streets, and whose sleeping-places even dogs might shun, have, since the date of that night excursion, been enabled to rise from suffering, and to escape the outcast's lot.

VII.

More Histories—The Romance of Boy Life.

CHAPTER VII.

MORE HISTORIES — THE ROMANCE OF BOY LIFE.

IN connection with the Juvenile Mission undertaken by Dr. Barnardo, many striking life-histories, alike instructive to working evangelists and sympathising onlookers, rise to the surface. Many of these narratives, picked up in the street, have been issued in separate tracts and leaflets, to effect a good purpose by attracting public attention to the woes of London waifs and strays. It is proper that the public should learn something about these children. That knowing little Jem Jervis, who lingered in the ragged-school-room one cold windy night, and then, after a sumptuous meal of coffee and bread-and-butter, conducted his entertainer to the roof of the Rag Exchange, had a novel story to relate, a narrative quite becoming a little adventurer who indirectly had a share in establishing the Home. Jem little suspected the influence he was exercising, as, when warmed with unlooked-for refreshment, he told his tale, enlivened with strokes of native wit such as popular speakers might covet. The manner of his 'sleeping out,' his differences with the police, and his running away with a gleeful 'hooray!' from that rascally lighterman who ill-used him, were each and all remembered, and, under the exciting influence of hot coffee, were related with becoming gusto.

Little Jem Jervis was simply a friendless waif; but, from his experience let it not be thought that every subject coming under the influence of the Stepney philanthropists has a similar tale of neglect to narrate. Not a few lads in London who required a helping hand are the offspring of virtuous parents, who have been reduced by unavoidable misfortune. Two well-favoured little fellows, one of whom was lame, come under this description. The father was a steady, industrious, working bootmaker, the proceeds from whose unceasing toil barely sufficed to support a wife and seven children, to all of whom the man was affectionately attached. Troublous days dawned upon this humble household when the mother fell sick—the life struggle being hard and beyond her strength to bear—and died. The heart-broken husband, who had nothing to fall back upon in the savings-bank, bore up with what strength he himself retained, though terribly shaken. Feeling that he must not relax his efforts to provide for the family, he attended the shop where he obtained work, but was quite overcome by weakness and emotion in the presence of his employers. He felt he could work no more, but he must go home to die! Entering his own poor room, with a bitter cry of anguish bespeaking a broken heart, he clasped the corpse of her who had been his best earthly friend, and within a few hours the husband lay dead beside the form of the wife he had dearly loved! Such is the episode which explains how little Tommie and his lame brother came to want a helping hand to start them in the world.

There was another Tommie who had the mettle of genuine heroism in his nature. Tommie and the Doctor first became acquainted on a wintry morning, as the boy was awakened in a *cart, then* serving him for a sleeping chamber. On satisfying

himself that the intruder so suddenly appearing was no agent of the police nor of the School Board, Tommie became obligingly communicative, and with ready willingness accompanied his unknown friend to Stepney-causeway, there to partake of a warm breakfast, and to tell a life-history. Some time previously Tommie lost his mother by death, and when his father contracted another alliance, Tommie decamped from home, because wholly disapproving of the new domestic arrangements. He now earned a precarious livelihood, by selling newspapers, but meeting with an accident, he was compelled to lie by in an hospital, and during his absence from duty another boy stepped into the newspaper-trading vacancy. Many hard and bitter days now passed over the child's head. Sitting there by the Home fire in the early morning, he spoke about what he had endured as well as of the temptations he had escaped. If poor and ragged, he was at least honest. He had been locked up in a police-cell for trespassing on doorsteps, but never for any greater offence. He had persistently refused to join a thieves' company when invited to do so, though starvation, sore feet, and the pain of wandering hopelessly over London might have been pleaded as excuses for his heeding the tempter. Nor was this all. Tommie once endured a master temptation, and in God's mercy came off completely victorious. One day, after having tasted no food during some forty-eight hours, he was sauntering along Whitechapel, when, in a fit of desperation, he stretched forth his hand to seize a 'faggot' from a stall. Why did he not steal and eat? Certain Bible words, learned in a ragged-school class, rushed into his mind, and proved stronger than the pangs of hunger. Tommie actually ran away, lest nature's cravings should overcome his principles. At length a sickly faintness

stole over him, and perhaps he would have sat down to die had not a passing stranger ministered to his relief. Tommie was indeed a conqueror. There was real heroism in what he did, and already he began to taste the reward. In spite of his rags, wan face, and shrunken, hunger-pinched limbs, he could stand erect, look his friend in the face, and speak a truth of which a true English boy is justly proud—I am not a thief, sir!

Observers of the ways of the poor know that there are many exceptionably good mothers as well as disgustingly bad ones in the poorest walks of life. Numbers of lads who come under Dr. Barnardo's care will, in after life, have reason to bless the memory of parents who did the best they were able to do for their children, and perhaps shortened their days by over-work and self-denial.

A woman of this high character, who had reached the last stage of life's severe struggle, stood one morning at the door of the Stepney Home, awaiting the arrival of the superintendent. The last hope for her child was based on the Home in Stepney-causeway. Pale and thin, enduring the hardship of want, she was a successful pleader; and then, thinking herself of little consequence, she uncomplainingly retired to the workhouse—the last sad stage of many a hard-working life.

A painful acquaintance with the appalling suffering of the destitute, as endured in mid-winter, may even unnerve a man. Dr. Barnardo tells how, when the Mission funds have been exhausted, he has literally shrunk from obeying a summons to read the Scriptures to the poor, and he has lacked nerve to go, in consequence of sheer inability to bear the sight of fireless grates and foodless cupboards at an inclement season. If such philanthropists as our friends at Stepney could but command the

money which the injudicious unthinkingly throw to strolling beggars, how would real charity thrive, the hands of the best friends of the poor be strengthened, and undeserving impostors be discouraged!

Even the middle classes are concerned in this work of reclamation, because now and again a lad respectably connected is picked up and restored to his wondering friends. The son of a clergyman and able writer was recently restored to his family circle, from which, for a very slight reason, he had mysteriously decamped.

It has been Dr. Barnardo's custom to go forth through the streets to seek the perishing, and compel them, in the gospel sense, to come into the Home and be saved bodily as well as spiritually. It would naturally be supposed that every child of misfortune encountered on the cold, inhospitable streets, exposed to every pain that want and exposure to the weather can inflict, would rejoice in escaping such suffering on any terms; but this is not always the case. Boys thrown upon the streets become accustomed to what looks to them to be a life of roving freedom, and anything resembling steady, straightforward industry is distasteful to them. They accept life as it comes, not only without complaining, but they are even exhilarated at times, as may be seen by their appreciation when 'a run of luck' falls to their share; and, while 'luck' is their one and only divinity, they are not addicted to grumbling when fortune does not attend them.

A lad of the roving, independent caste was once encountered by Dr. Barnardo and his Arab guide while the two were abroad exploring the environs of Whitechapel. The time was midnight; and 'luck' was so far smiling upon the newly-found

youngster that he had appropriated a barrel for a bedroom. He accosted his late 'pal,' the Doctor's companion, with looks and tones betokening both commiseration and condescension. The occupant of the barrel was free, though he might not know whence the morrow's food would come, while the other had no better rendezvous than a Home or a Refuge. Highly did the hero of the cask appear to prize his advantages. Would he not turn over a new leaf, reform, and be industrious? Well, to tell the truth, he preferred retaining his personal freedom; but if in the coming winter-time he should experience a harder run for life than usual, he would at least think about the matter, turn it over in his mind, and he might possibly entertain the gentleman's offer! Yet even in the face of such facts we may not hastily accuse these boys of ingratitude. Educated persons do not always judge correctly of one another's motives; how much less may we expect infallibility in this respect from untaught, wandering London Arabs. It is not according to their nature to dissociate the solicitude strangers appear to entertain for them from sinister, or at least from disinterested motives. The policeman is their dreaded foe, and to their sore dismay School Board agents have lately appeared on the scene. Life is a hard struggle when accepted on these terms, so that when a better friend than either policemen or School Board gentlemen comes to light, it must be expected that street youngsters will harbour suspicion until the truth is fully ascertained. In a great measure the truth about Dr. Barnardo's motives has long ago been learned by the poor of London; for, as a recognised boy's friend, the Doctor is, perhaps, better known among the denizens of the metropolitan slums than any other philanthropist in his walk of life. Into the repulsive recesses of the vilest lodging-houses he

has penetrated at dead of night, and from rooms, or rather dens, reeking with filth and swarming with vermin, has selected youthful woe-begone subjects, eager to forsake their way of life for courses of industry, and for the home comforts which industry ensures. Even the nooks and crannies of the river-side have furnished the Home with human material. In those damp gloomy streets the night police recognise the rays of the explorer's lamp, and the sound of his well-known step, as he approaches with a kindly salutation. The Thames police acknowledge that he is a greater adept than the magistrate in the art of transforming wrong-doers into good and thrifty citizens.

Many sad histories may be picked up at night by the river-side. There, within sound of the splashings of the thick black water, you are out of the region of lodging-houses, but not of lodging-places. You must not expect to find the lads you seek in holes and corners only slightly hidden from public view. You will remember that the public employs policemen to search all such retreats, for the purpose of arousing and driving from their lairs the unfortunates who, wild-beast like, huddle themselves up therein and fall asleep, instead of providing themselves with proper bedrooms. Extreme juvenile indigence is not 'green.' Arabs of the Jem Jervis type soon learn to outmatch the vigilance of Z 99. Hence it would appear that one who adopts Dr. Barnardo's profession must be more subtle than the police; for many of the waifs and strays who have passed through the Stepney Home have come forth from hiding-places unknown to Z 99, from places passed over by him as above suspicion.

One night, when the streets and wharfs bordering around a certain spot on the Middlesex side of the Thames were found to be unusually free from 'water-babies,' 'mudlarks,' and other

minor divisions of the London boy genus, our friend, who was out 'on tramp,' might have dismissed his attendant, extinguished his light, and have retired home to bed without laying hands on one candidate to fill six vacancies occurring at the Home, but for a happy idea. Looking down towards the river bank, he descried an unladen barge, and he thought it might be just possible that the interior, below water-mark, was metamorphosed into a lodging-house by the missing boys. Away they went to board the vessel, and on holding a lamp over the dark damp hold, there were the persons they sought, heaped one upon another, to secure all the warmth that was to be had. There they were, surely enough, a pile of rags and misery. Probably there was not one 'green' boy among them; for had they gone beyond the city bounds they could not have been more securely shielded from the scrutiny of Z 99. On arousing the sleepers, six of the number were selected and led forth willing captives to Stepney-causeway. A ray of hope indeed broke in upon them when the bull's-eye lantern suddenly revealed their secret retreat. It may have been the first ray of hope they even knew, while the words of the friend who found them may have been the first expressions of encouragement to which they ever listened.

To perambulate London streets during the hours between midnight and 6 a.m. is a sure and speedy method, though a sufficiently novel one, as some will think, of becoming correctly acquainted with the wants and woes about which all know too little, and none too much. Whithersoever one may turn, the same tale of poverty, and of poverty's attendant pains, is heard, while the phases so differ that something new is ever occurring. The lad who is discovered cowering and shivering behind a board

placed against a wall, may be, as one such has turned out to be, the son of a drinking father, who has driven his son into the street by way of diversion. Go farther, and it may be that other lads, huddling closely together beneath a barrow, are real subjects of indigence, some of whom eagerly catch at that magical word 'Home;' while others, as lovers of 'liberty,' prefer present suffering to any discipline and comfort the helping hand can offer. This temper may be a strange infatuation, but then it is the infatuation of juvenile prejudice and ignorance.

While the majority of poor street-boys are only too glad to be admitted into the Home, some refuse to leave their native walks, and others, from various causes, require some amount of coaxing before they consent to enter on new courses. In the brush-makers' room I particularly noticed a handsome, intelligent-looking lad, and one who was very industrious as well as very cheerful. The Doctor and this boy recognised each other in a genial manner, just as the rescued and the rescuer might be expected to do. Motherless, and the son of an inveterate drunkard, this lad, until quite a recent date, was accustomed to nothing better than a life of street wandering, and had no higher aim in life than that of drawing sundry coppers from the pockets of casual passengers. A photograph of 'Jem,' as he appeared in those days, is shown—those dark, despairing days; but one might defy an expert to recognise in the picture the 'Jem' of to-day. Appearing in his native rags, unwashed, and with eyes inflamed from exposure to the weather, the boy of the one portrait would be taken for any ordinary Arab; he certainly would not be identified with the pleasant-featured industrious artisan I watched making brushes at the Home. Once despair was seen in his gait, in the ominous shake of the head, when he

was asked if he would lead a different course, and was heard in the tones of his thick, quivering voice, as he faltered, 'Dunno.' Here, then, is a moral reformation, as wonderful a change as that of a leopard changing his spots and the Ethiopian his skin. Life has attractions now, the future has hope, and 'Jem' promises to do credit to his friends.

The series of striking photographs published by Dr. Barnardo enable those who choose to procure them to understand the nature of the work in progress far better than mere verbal descriptions. The past and the present condition of the lads is forcibly portrayed by the photographer's art, and the result is a series of transformation scenes both unique and affecting. The same subjects are placed before us under different circumstances. In the one we see a boy 'sleeping out' on the stones; in the counterpart the same person appears as he is in the Home, 'tucked up for the night.' Here sits one in the street—'Please sir, I've got no work to do;' and there he is again in a comfortable uniform and happy face—'But I'm in work now, you know.' There is a group as they appeared when 'on the streets,' and there they are as they look at present. The series includes sixty of these instructive and entertaining scenes, which all persons who are interested in the good work should procure. Present hope contrasts with former despair, and present comfort with former indigence, in a very striking manner.

VIII.

The Fruits of Reclamation.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FRUITS OF RECLAMATION.

IN this chapter I purpose looking at some of the results which have come from ragged-school teaching. The first voluntary teacher of whom history takes account was John Falk, a German, who commenced work in his native land early in the present century. In a worldly sense Falk was an unfortunate man; but, as his ragged constituents yielded him no remuneration, he did not affect philanthropy for the sake of gain. He was a member of an extensive tribe—unsuccessful authors—the reputation he won by the pen being no more than that of 'a small-beer genius.' Falk, however, was not a man to be snuffed out by failure in one direction; for when discouraged by publishers, he set his heart on higher things.

At the close of the great European war, Germany had many orphans, for whom no one seemed to care. Having a large heart, Falk determined on devoting energy and substance to their reclamation, and he was mortified most of all when friends stood by to look coldly on his efforts, by giving grudgingly to the work. Falk was a man of indomitable zeal when he found his proper work. He is said to have possessed only one idea, but that one was worthy of a genius. He gathered hundreds of

scholars, to whom he first taught Christ, and then introduced them to useful industries. 'Could you see us,' he once wrote, 'you would rejoice and bless God. The children of robbers and murderers sing psalms and pray; boys are making locks out of the insulting iron which was destined for their hands and feet, and are building houses which they formerly delighted to break open. Yes, it is indeed true that, where chains and stocks, the lash and the prison, were powerless, love comes off victorious.' This last remark will testify to the justice of what we formerly said about the influence of prison discipline. Some idea of the efficiency of this noble master and his ragged band may be inferred from the fact that when, in 1821, the school was compelled to shift its quarters, new premises were erected by the scholars themselves, under Falk's supervision.

The example set by Falk should stimulate Christian workers of every grade. Many lessons also come home to the heart while looking at the work of a man like the late John Dereham, of Exeter, who, from a lowly origin, rose to win the distinction of being a benefactor of poor children. In early life this man lost his wife by death, in addition to which crushing affliction he became heavily involved in debt. Standing one day before a window, in a disconsolate mood, and probably thinking himself the most wretched of men, an afflicted cripple passed along the street, and Mr. Dereham became suddenly conscious that he was more favoured than the cripple. He turned from the window with seeds of hope germinating in his heart. From that hour he trusted in God, while working with energy and perseverance. He prospered, rose step by step, until he was a rich, respected man, whose wealth and influence were devoted to God. He himself was a teacher of poor children, and the recognised friend of

all who were either in want or suffering. When the end came, he died regretted by the citizens of Exeter, and left a proportion of his estate to the local charities.

What are called the outcast classes of great towns have often enough been compared to moral wastes; but wastes are undeveloped resources. A farmer enters into possession of an extensive tract of land, which no one has ever cared to cultivate, and does so because he has discovered undeveloped wealth in the soil, such as may be turned to account. He sets to work actively and hopefully, dividing the bare-looking plain into fields, making fences of ugly rocks, setting plough, harrow, and manure-cart to work, until the late wilderness buds and blossoms, and the highest in the land alight to admire what has been achieved. Even this is no fanciful picture, for the Queen and the Prince Consort once visited the land of a Scotch farmer, who had done all that is described. As people looked on, they may have said that a miracle had been wrought; but the moral wastes of London, as cultivated by the reclaimers of children, have been subjected to a greater miracle. Nor have other towns been behind in the same kind of work; for, years ago, it was said that the streets of Dundee and Aberdeen had been cleared of all their ragged waifs.

It is natural to look for results in happy homes and amended lives; for, as visible fruits, these are eminently encouraging. Nevertheless, the results of labour among the Arabs of London have been seen in more happy death-beds than can be counted, and for one peaceful death there are many reformed lives. After all their fond care and seed-sowing, teachers are pained when, as it appears to human short-sightedness, the objects of solicitude are cut down at a tender age. Philosophy has tried

to reconcile man to the encroachments of death on youth, and poets have sung of the same theme, but Christianity, in its own way, accounts for what is momentarily painful; and none feel more keenly than the friends of poor children when the fruits of labour are transferred from sight to another world. Why, however, should kind hearts grow heavy? It is for another world they are working, and the victory is not less complete when early piety ensures an early reward. Many singular triumphs of faith are exemplified in young converts taken from the streets. One who is lying in his last illness learns that tracts are being distributed in the court below, and desires to have one. Hearing of this request, the minister enters the house, and finds a little fellow in bed, rejoicing in Christian hope. Is he not afraid to die? 'Oh, no,' he answers. He is young, and the world might be supposed to retain attractions for youth. That may be, but he is sure of heaven. 'I feel that Jesus will get God to take me,' he cried. That boy was typical of hundreds of others who have found a Saviour in the ragged-school.

A strong proof of the Divine origin of Christianity is found in the fact that it teaches young persons to die readily and willingly. There lived a little boy who attended Sunday-school, who declared that he should be happy if he could live on earth for ever, with plenty of money; but if people were to enjoy such short lives, he did not see the use of trying to be this and that, —dying being to him like going into a dark house without any light. That lad was a philosopher, and, as regarded living for ever and commanding limitless wealth, he was in nowise singular. This delusion is as wide-spread as the earth, and though continually contradicted by the experience of real life, people remain willingly deceived. To return, however, to the child who

thought dying resembled going into a dark house without any light. His teacher told him of those who had died rejoicing in Christ; but it was hard to convince the boy, when appearances argued to the contrary, and a change in his sentiments would have to be brought about by other means. Before teacher and scholar met again, the scholar was laid low by sickness, and he then gave evidence of his opinions concerning death having modified. When visited, he said that he was not afraid to die now; and he did die, the death of a saint. Had a lad, with so unusual an early experience, lived to mature age, he might possibly have adorned the Christian ministry; and he would not have been the first from the ragged-school ranks who have shone in the pulpit. A waif of New York once saved fifty pounds to help pay the expenses of a college education.

These children sometimes manifest traits of character which prove them to be uncommon characters, while their simple faith is their best ornament. Our Father in heaven is to them a parent who may be asked for aught we need, in childlike fashion; the doubts which trouble more cultured people, about the efficacy of prayer, and the great gulf of philosophy, being far removed from these humble petitioners. A ragged scholar, while playing with gunpowder, accidentally blinded himself, and thus became completely dependent on those who were ill able to bear the burden. His parents, being of the better sort, desired to give the sufferer the best attention their means would afford; but kindness seemed to be of no avail, the visiting surgeon declaring the case to be hopeless. Little Jim was not an uninterested party to the discussions that occurred; and one day, after hearing his doom, he retired to a corner of the room, fell on his knees, and cried, 'O Lord Jesus, when Thou wast on

earth Thou didst make the blind to see. Have pity on me, a poor blind boy, and open my eyes. The doctor has tried, and cannot. O Jesus, open my eyes, and have mercy upon me. Amen.' He would be a rash man who would contemn such a prayer of faith; and will it seem strange when it is added that the appeal was answered? By slow degrees the light really came back to the injured eyes; and though he never saw as perfectly as before the accident, Jim did not remain totally blind.

I once heard a preacher contrast the difference between preaching to sermon-proof people and appealing to those who may be esteemed almost too bad for reclamation. It was shown that the depraved might be more hopeful characters than the others. The one might be lectured without effect, but the depraved might catch the heavenly fire, reminding the preacher of one poking lucifers into haystacks. This is a faithful representation of a great truth, and it is delightful to see how even children learn to value the gospel after having lived among the worst associations. The gospel comes to the child, and, before evil has entirely marred its character, Christ enters in, and the child becomes a pattern to older people. A poor woman once called at a school to bear witness to the benefit both she and her daughter had received. Jane—that was the child's name—was overheard telling another child about the wonderful things of God: 'My teacher says we cannot be good unless we ask God to make us so: let us ask our Father in heaven to make us good children.' Falling on their knees, the two offered a prayer which was doubtless heard in heaven. The mother looked on, was moved at the sight, and her heart was touched. 'I have never since that time,' she said, 'let a day pass without imploring God to grant me

the blessing of a new heart.' Is there any missionary who can unconsciously live and preach the gospel so convincingly as a child of tender years who has learned to estimate the worth of the unsearchable riches of Christ?

The squalor amid which the lower classes in London live, joined to the drink, necessarily blunts their moral instincts, until they see nothing attractive in any life different from what they have been accustomed to lead. Every amateur reformer is ready with a prescription for healing their sins and woes. One says, Send them to the colonies; another would educate them; and at a social science congress it was maintained that the people must be freed from base surroundings before any good, either sacred or secular, can touch their hearts. The Christian worker, however, accepts no such doctrine. The gospel he carries goes straight to sinners as they are, and by striking at the root of evil associations at once frees them from thraldom, raises them from the depths of sin's horrible pit, and blesses them with light and liberty. We have seen how scholars carry home the word to apparently reprobate parents, and when the message thus communicated bears fruit in conversion, the blessed results following are the highest encouragement a teacher can receive. There was a lad who attended school, whose father, a confirmed drunkard, was a working carpenter, and well able to pay for his son's schooling. Under the peculiar circumstances, this lad was admitted into the 'ragged' class, contrary to the rule, his sire being an abandoned character, spending his earnings on himself. That boy spoke about what he learned at school in his father's hearing, little thinking he would thereby become the means of a drunkard's reformation. He merely intended to give some

specimens of the lessons learned, but the words spoken were gospel words. The drunkard listened, then began to think, was convicted of sin in his conscience, the result being that he became a changed character. He next called at the school, to thank the teachers for what they had done for his son, and being no longer under the dominion of drink, he placed the boy in a school where he would be paid for in an honourable manner.

Cases occur, however, in which the harsh, unnatural conduct of parents has threatened to deprive children of reason. Dr. Barnardo has come across some remarkable examples, and in each instance better treatment has produced the most beneficial if not surprising change. In one of his speeches, Lord Shaftesbury related a case of a lad whom he described as having been the most remarkable example 'of physical suffering and degradation' he had ever witnessed. When received into the Westminster Refuge, this boy was covered with sores. He was almost an imbecile, his mother, meanwhile, caring nothing for him, she being one of the most abandoned and sin-hardened of her sex. Literally driven from home like a beast, the child wandered about the streets at the West End, until a thief of the neighbourhood, moved with pity, brought him to a city missionary, emaciated and covered with vermin. Such boys may seem to be insensible to misery, but this is not the truth, for really ingenious are the shifts adopted by those who 'sleep out.' Dr. Barnardo, perhaps more than any other street explorer, can tell strange stories of boy life in its lowest forms, and others who have gone 'on tramp' at night have also seen heart-touching sights. Places near to bakers' ovens and boilers are sought, because of their warmth, and boys have even been

found buried in heaps of rubbish, their heads being alone visible. Yet there is not one of these who may not become our instructor, and perhaps a strange wit may even colour their relations.

Kind treatment soon produced a change in the boy befriended by the thief, and, though partially idiotic, he did not listen to the gospel in vain. Happily his intellect was not gone, it was merely held in subjection by the appalling evils to which he had been exposed, and these being removed, reason reasserted her ascendency. In his new situation he was entirely trustworthy, thereby winning a good name. He finally emigrated to Australia, where he prospered, and showed the genuineness of the heart-change that had occurred, by addressing a letter full of dutiful expressions, and descriptive of the country and his situation, to the woman who had proved herself unworthy to be the mother of such a child. What teacher ever looked for or hoped for more blessed results than these? What finer illustration ever occurred of heaping coals of fire on an enemy's head?

Nocturnal adventures in the streets may be sufficiently sensational to show that those who spend their time in alleviating misery pick up ideas surpassing those things styled 'romantic' which colour the pages of fiction. A Manchester gentleman related the following adventure on a platform in London :—

Some little time ago it was my privilege to know a packer in a large warehouse. One night he came home just as I was finishing for the day, and he had under each arm an empty sack rolled up. He took one, and, throwing it to me, said, 'There, take that and come after me.' I said to him, 'You are very polite, certainly;' but I took it up and followed him, as I knew his mission was mercy. I followed him, and he went down to some railway stables, and then he took his sack from under his arm and began to fill it with straw, and called upon me to follow his example.

Immediately he had filled his sack he took out a packing-needle and sewed up the end of the sack, and then, tossing it over the straw, he bade me do the same with mine. I sewed mine up accordingly, and then he took his sack, and, throwing it over his shoulder, darted into the street, and told me to take up my sack and come after him. 'Stop a minute,' I said. 'I can't stand this. I can stand carrying the empty sack here, and I can stand sewing up the end, but this carrying it full of straw is too much for me.' He said, 'Come along, you will never repent it.' Well, off he walked, and I took up my sack and walked after him. He went along one street, and then down another, until he got into the poorest and worst part of the city, and at last he came to a wretched alley, and disappeared into a house where I could hardly see my way. However, I went up the creaking stairs after him. When he got to the top, he took out of his pocket what we call in Lancashire 'a short six.' He lighted this with a lucifer, and stuck it against the wall in the garret, and then left me for a minute or two to look about me. Here I saw five or six heaps of rags huddled up in a corner, which turned out to be five or six poor children. They had not even a bed to lie upon, and there they lay upon the floor, their little arms about one another. This noble man then took his bed, and called upon me to help him; and so between us, he at the head, and I at the legs, managed to move them one by one, very gently, until his bed was full. He then said, 'Now for your bed, I am afraid it is rather hard;' and we moved the remainder of the poor little things, and laid them on my bed; and when he had done—what a noble spirit he had!—he said, 'Don't they look nice now?' And then he darted out of the room, and very shortly returned with a quartern loaf, half a pound of butter, two ounces of souchong, and two or three things of that kind. . . . . When we got into the dark street it was one o'clock in the morning.

Such are they whom we desire to raise, and in future days respectable men and women may thank God for those who helped them in youth. If good is accomplished, give God the glory; the instruments take no more than the credit due to unprofitable servants. A gentleman once gave a lady some money in aid of an orphan, and the lady said she would teach the child to thank his benefactor in future years. The gentleman would not have it so. 'We do not thank the clouds for rain,' he said.

'Teach him to look higher, and thank Him who giveth both the clouds and the rain.'

Perhaps there is no more convincing testimony regarding the good results arising from the school than the homely speech of those who attend 'old scholars'' meetings. At these assemblies the veritable subjects who have been reclaimed are congregated. They were once ragged and undone, but rescued and started in the world, they are qualified to speak for themselves, and are entitled to the deference paid to trustworthy witnesses. If a 'tea,' or something of that be arranged, the 'old boys' come in force, and, as young men, bring their wives, to form a social gathering of an enjoyable character. What words can describe how such people appreciate the ample supplies of cake and other substantial edibles provided? At the tables friends meet together whose friendship began under unpropitious circumstances, and they tell of hardships overcome and of victories achieved. Then come the speeches. One rises to contrast the forlorn condition of his boyhood with present advantages, and acknowledges that under God he owes all to the school. While still young he lost a leg by amputation, but, apprenticed to a tailor, he subsequently prospered. Another remembers the school in its beginnings, when the boys were few, and when the school-room was perhaps merely an arch beneath a railway. In those days he has starved for thirty-six hours, but at present he can point to a thrifty wife and happy home. Whence came these blessings? Under God, all came from the school. The second speaker has scarce sat down, when a third is on his feet, and one who can corroborate all that has been spoken. He came to that place quite a little fellow, and, after attending five years, was put in a situation, and a grand start in life was given when he won a school prize

of ten shillings' worth of carpenter's tools. Thus one after another tells a different story, but all alike testify to the grand truth, that a little judicious help, timely given, may save a human being from moral or even physical death, and give society many faithful servants.

The testimony of scholars at home concerning the achievements of those who reclaim waifs and strays is sufficiently convincing, but many old scholars go across the seas, and if it can be shown that these also sustain a good profession in the colonies, the success of their home trainers must be considered still more complete. The friends of street waifs in London are actually conferring a boon on the colonies; for those great settlements which properly object to being plagued with the criminal refuse of the mother country, gladly receive emigrants from institutions like those of Dr. Barnardo and others. It is well known that 'Lord Shaftesbury's boys,' as the class are frequently designated, readily find employers and friends in Australia and the sister islands. This is good fruit indeed. Teach these children to respect their species, and to cease looking on mankind as enemies, and they become in turn respected and valued. Their case even becomes in the main identical with that of Doddridge's little daughter, whom everybody loved, and who accounted for the fact by saying it was because she loved everybody.

Then one visible result of reclaiming street waifs is that they frequently outshine their betters in a knowledge of the oracles of God. Whether it be wise to accept government aid in work purely philanthropic need not be argued, but government officials are apt to affect a high personal importance, which sometimes seems to despise the gospel. A grand official gentleman entered

a school to examine the children, and the minister accompanying him, one who was deeply concerned about the scholars' progress, requested the visitor to test the youngsters' acquaintance with Scripture. Scripture was not a thing to the inspector's taste, and so, with a tinge of sarcasm, he off-handedly cried, 'Talk to them about Scripture and texts? I should like to ask them if they could tell me a text with the word 'if' in it.' On a form hard by sat a little girl who may have supposed that the examination was commencing, and that she might as well respond to the gentleman's query as any one else. A text with the word 'if' in it? The little girl remembered one: 'IF ANY MAN BE IN CHRIST HE IS A NEW CREATURE.' On referring to this incident, Lord Shaftesbury said that he would have preferred being rebuked by the Speaker of the House of Commons, or called to order by the Lord Chief Justice of England, to being unconsciously reproved and taught the gospel by a ragged scholar.

We make a trite remark by observing that Christianity benefits the body as well as the soul, and improves its professors' social standing while it purifies the heart and life. Religion teaches the housewife to be thrifty in her home and neat in her person; the coster is encouraged to be humane to his beast and straightforward in every transaction. There is one other innovation worthy of notice. The friends of the street waif have discovered the power of flowers, and so flower-shows and window-gardening have now become recognised institutions. Let us consider what vast credit is due to lads who nurture a dahlia or train a rosebud among the most uncanny surroundings, and who have to watch their treasures and vanquish their enemies night and day. Let us consider all this, and we shall

admire Bob's experience as narrated in the *Leisure Hour* some years ago, *e.g.*:—

Anxious days and nights does he sometimes pass as the show-day draws near; and many a time have we seen him dash off at full speed from his work as the dinner-hour struck, and race homewards to see how the nursling was getting on. We knew an enthusiastic Camberwell competitor some time ago, who, having raised a bouncing dark dahlia to a prodigious size, grew exceedingly nervous and apprehensive lest any harm should befall it. He invented ingenious devices in the shape of paper traps for vermin, and these he disposed about the stem of the plant, so as to fortify all approaches to the flower. Nevertheless, on the night before the flower-show he lay down to sleep full of fears, and when he did sleep, was oppressed with a horrible dream of a big black slug rioting among the glorious petals of his darling. He leaped from his bed, lighted his lamp, and rushed down to his patch of garden. There, sure enough, he caught, not a slug, but a caitiff earwig, who had surmounted all his defences, and who, had he arrived five minutes later, would infallibly have ruined his flower. As ill-luck would have it, just as the earwig was disposed of, and Bob was coming away, after a careful and prying examination of his treasure, Policeman Something suddenly turned his bull's-eye on him, and leaping the low fence rushed to apprehend him as a burglar. The policeman's path lay right in the direction of the flower, which in another moment he would have crushed to ruin; but Bob caught him by a timely grip on the collar, and the next moment both lay struggling on the ground. Of course the matter was soon explained, though the explanation turned the laugh against Bob, who cared little for that next day, when he bore away a handsome medal as first prizeman. Other prizes had been won by our careful friend, who had come off with honours eight or ten times. One trait of his character we take leave to mention, because it is more honourable to him than any prize of his winning. On one occasion he packed a box of prime dahlias for exhibition at a famous country show; he knew they could not be excelled, and felt sure of a prize; and, to make assurance doubly sure, he carried the box himself to the railway station, and saw it booked for despatch. Owing to the neglect or forgetfulness of the booking clerk, it was not sent till after the adjudication; and, though the flowers were universally acknowledged to be the best on the ground, Bob lost his prize, as they came too late. He was advised to sue the railway company for compensation. 'But no,' said he, 'it will bring the clerk into trouble; I shall say nothing about it.'

With large results before our eyes, and with encouraging prospects to stimulate new effort, it might be expected that no opponents would arise to call in question the blessings conferred on the country by child-reclaimers; but the good work has met with bitter opponents, and especially was this the case at the time of its earliest beginning. The testimony of untrustworthy witnesses was procured and paraded by those who, perhaps, thought it unfair to children of better parents when waifs of the gutter were placed in situations which others might be glad to fill. It is impossible to satisfy all opponents, but an effective reply to unreasonable cavilling is, that workers like Dr. Barnardo, and others in sympathy with him, open fields of enterprise for themselves; and even were the most unfortunate of our street children simply prepared to stand as competitors in the labour market, it would be hard to show why British subjects, because they are unfortunate, should not be entitled to live and work like other people. The worker goes among these children, and he soon finds that the religion he professes requires he should help the needy in temporal things while showing them the way of salvation. Hence the origin of the multifarious industries which are now part of the restorative machinery, and more important still, the opening of the Colonies to these hopeful emigrants. The reclaimers of the young are not moved by Utopian ideas. They merely wish to transform their charge into Christian working people, and when boys become the valued helps of farmers in the New World, and girls the adopted daughters of childless employers, a rich reward is vouchsafed. From the Home in Stepney-causeway children are continually being sent out into life. They go to various parts of our foreign dominions, and rarely do they disappoint

their friends. These are grand results, and sufficient to swell our hearts with gratitude. Who can think of what Dr. Barnardo has done; who can take into account the twelve hundred girls taken from London courts and alleys by Miss Rye to be transferred to an American clime; and who can look on the eighteen hundred boys whom Miss Macpherson has in a similar manner taken to Canada; and not confess with heart and tongue that the School and the Industrial Home are among the institutions of the age which Christ is owning and blessing?

Who among us knows what he is doing while engaged in godlike actions? We are unprofitable servants, meriting no reward, but none the less may the return be rich beyond what we dare to anticipate even in our happiest moods. I have read of a traveller who halted at a wayside cottage where he found a widow and her children just about to eat their last loaf. The woman freely offered to share her meal with the stranger, and did so for a good reason—she had a son wandering about the world, and she acted as she desired others should act if they encountered her absent child. That woman was actually entertaining her son while obeying a scriptural injunction; and though she looked not for reward, she soon learned that her guest had come from a distant shore with sufficient wealth to make easy his mother's age. Have any lost a child by death? Cherish its memory by blessing the life of those who have some claim on your regard as children of one common Father. Have any lost sight of a child through waywardness? Take pity on these waifs and strays of the street; do them that kindness you would be glad to pay for could you ensure its being done to the absent one you love. Conscience impels you to do what you can; the workers themselves invite your

co-operation; and Christ Himself condescends to speak words of encouragement—'Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, . . . ye have done it unto me.' Remember also how emphatic was the command to the Israelites of old, to instruct their children in the oracles of God—'And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.'

IX.

'The Edinburgh Castle.'

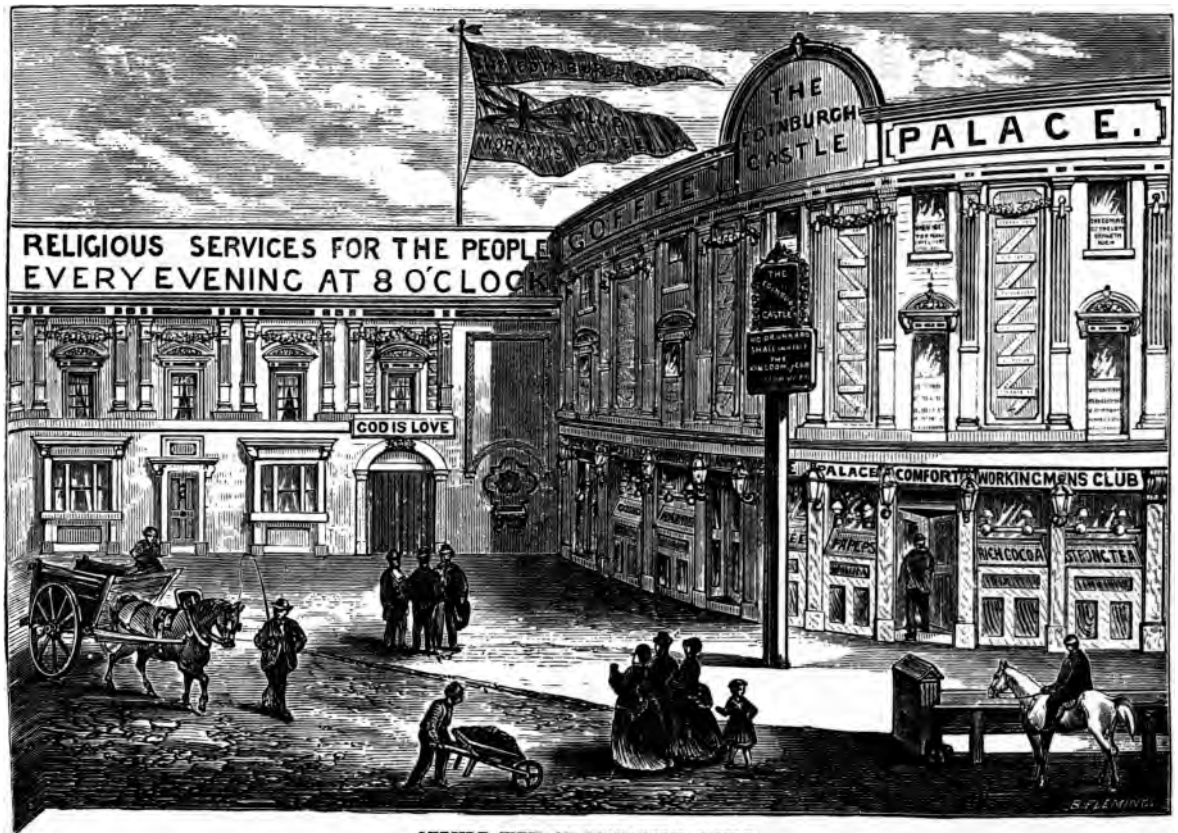
CHAPTER IX.

'THE EDINBURGH CASTLE.'

HAVING now learned all about the circumstances associated with the origin of the Home in Stepney-causeway, we reluctantly vacate our chairs beside the office fire, and go forth to visit another station of this great mission—a kind of workmen's club, refreshment-house, and preaching-station, all in one. In St. Paul's-road, Limehouse, occupying an eligible commanding site, stands a public-house of considerable pretentions. Though 'THE EDINBURGH CASTLE' may be a noted site in the annals of 'the trade,' it would ill serve our purpose to give full particulars of that history. Finding their lot cast in the midst of a thickly-populated 'gin-drinking neighbourhood,' former proprietors of the house must have found themselves among associations entirely congenial to their taste as publicans of enterprise. There were not wanting any of the appliances for transacting an extensive trade. There was a showy gin-palace kind of bar, while in the rear there were suites of rooms suitable for any company likely to be attracted. A conspicuous side-entrance opened into pleasure-gardens, where, of summer evenings, hundreds might congregate to drink and 'enjoy' themselves. Besides all other conveniences, there was a theatre, sufficiently large to accommo-

date an imposing assembly. It is true, sin might in the meantime be committed, souls might even be destroyed; but such things belonged to quite another reckoning! While there was money to be amassed, what worldly-wise pushing landlord would refuse to turn the opportunity to full account? If the landlords ever suffered from any inward misgivings, means were found for effectively suppressing the upbraidings of conscience. How many fortunes have been made by proprietors of 'The Edinburgh Castle' does not transpire; nor are we informed how many customers have had their fortunes 'unmade' within the same precincts. Let it suffice to say that the founder of the Boys' Home for long kept his eye on this citadel of immorality, and vainly, as it seemed, deplored the existence of such a centre of evil. The place was indeed a castle, as impregnable in one sense as its celebrated northern namesake, for the powers of evil strongly entrenched themselves within its walls, to counteract the efforts made by the evangelists to improve the youth of the neighbourhood and to lead them to God. In the theatre, one of the lowest of the low, sights were seen and language was heard calculated to contaminate all who entered. The establishment was, in a word, a school of vice and drunkenness.

A turn in the tide was about to occur, a crisis destined to be hastened, if not directly brought about, by the magnates who govern large breweries and distilleries, powers before whom even considerable publicans are expected to bend the knee. The landlord of 'The Edinburgh Castle' was not altogether his own master, was not so large a capitalist but that he could be brought under pressure by the great beer-kings and gin-princes whose names and occupations are published over London by means of gilded capital letters, worthy of the men and of their trade. Did it



OUTSIDE VIEW OF EDINBURGH CASTLE.

See page 116.

happen in an unpropitious or in a fortunate day that Mr. Landlord lost the fair esteem of those whose condescension was sufficiently seen in their taking his money? That, however, Mr. Landlord did grieve those potentates is an historical fact; another historical fact is that he speedily paid the price of his temerity. His general procedure as a tradesman was unsatisfactory, and he must be superseded by a more pliable or accommodating agent. The beer-kings and gin-princes commanded ready means of effecting their purpose. 'The Edinburgh Castle' being heavily mortgaged, payment was demanded, and to satisfy the claim the lease would have to be sold. To oblige the publican to sell, so that another should enter into possession of his house, was the design of the capitalists, and these gentlemen never suspected that the great establishment was saleable beyond the circle of 'the trade.' Who, without the circle of 'the trade,' other than a madman, would offer money for such a bargain?

'The Edinburgh Castle' for sale? The very announcement must have caused our Doctor's ears to tingle! Then a certain ambitious design engaged his thoughts—Why not make a bold move, buy the entire concern, and transform a plague-spot into a green oasis, to bless the wide moral desert of Limehouse and Stepney? Why not? Simply because there were no funds in hand, and the price of the house was four thousand two hundred pounds! No money? But others had money, which would be forthcoming to further such an undertaking as this. Should an endeavour be made in this grand enterprise? Ay, that it should. Dr. Barnardo tried, and, surprising to relate, collected the amount required in three weeks, arranged to purchase the premises, and signed the deed of transfer only a few minutes

before a music-hall proprietor entered the room, prepared to offer five hundred pounds over and above the sum for which the premises were already sold! In what kind of terms the beer-kings and gin-princes denounced this singular piece of diplomacy we were not sufficiently fortunate to hear explained. They obtained their money, and if that did not satisfy them they were powerless to interfere with the arrangements. Henceforth 'The Edinburgh Castle' was to retain its original name, and was under that designation to be exalted into a mission station.

The above will explain why, on a dark cold evening in November, we left the office fire in Stepney-causeway, for the purpose of walking as far as St. Paul's-road, Limehouse, calling on our way at the Pure Literature Dépôt, also established in connection with this movement. 'The Edinburgh Castle' would strike a casual customer not in the secret as being a novel kind of public-house. The characteristics of a tavern bar are preserved intact, the brewer's sign-board is left standing, but instead of notices directly concerning beer and gin, and sensational announcements over the theatre entrance to the effect that Monsieur Sherrin, Herr Zinker, and Mademoiselle Bosanquet are engaged 'for three nights only,' the advertisements are of a different kind. Over the side gateway flaming gas characters, shedding a cheerful refulgence across the street, tell the passengers that 'God is Love.' Looked at by daylight, the brewer's sign-board is found to be inscribed with a similar motto; and while window-blind notices tell that 'Hot Coffee,' and 'To-day's Papers,' may be had or seen within, the handsomely-gilded and plate-glass-fitted bar is surmounted with the text, 'WINE IS A MOCKER, STRONG DRINK IS RAGING, AND WHOSOEVER IS DECEIVED *THEREBY IS* NOT WISE.' Passing into the interior, apartments are

THE EDINBURGH CASTLE—'AT THE BAR.'

See page 116.

there provided into which all comers may retire to partake of refreshment, and to be entertained with an abundance of literary fare furnished by a multitude of periodicals and newspapers.

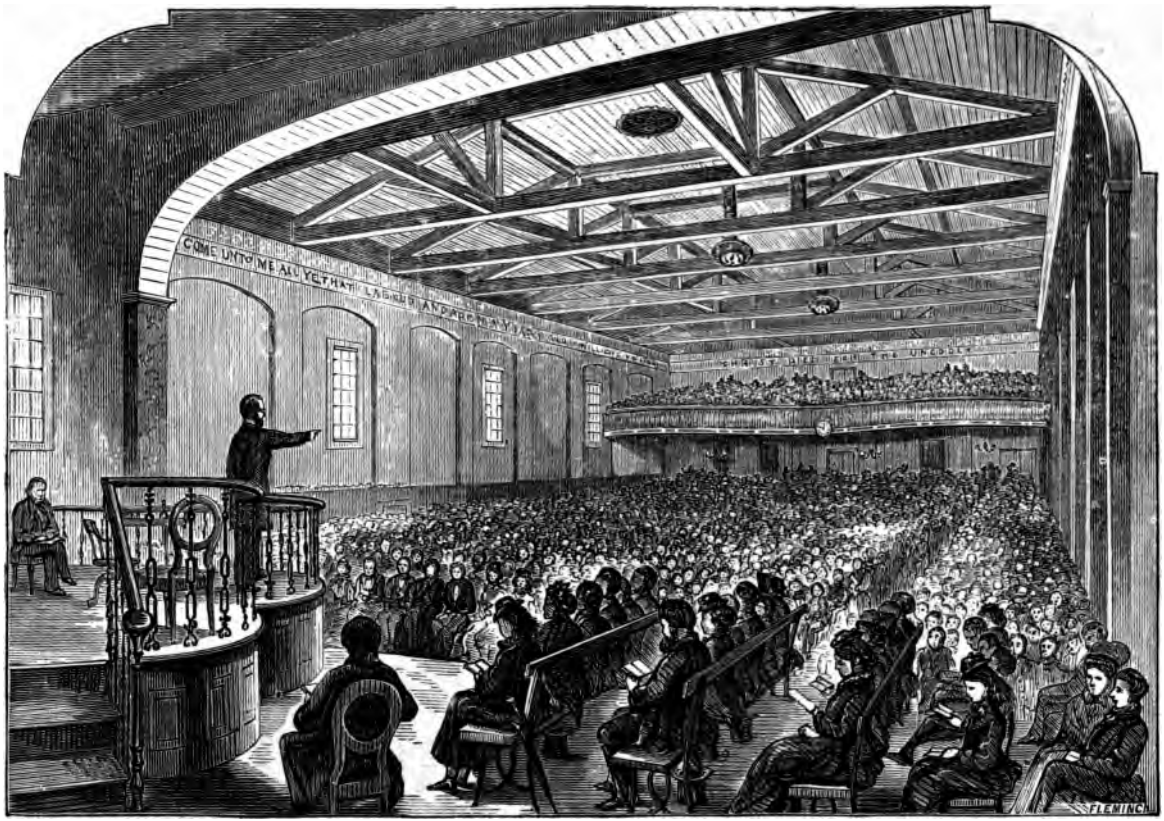
The time of our visit to this unique establishment happened to be Monday, the appointed evening of the week when Dr. Barnardo may be consulted on any matter or grievance by people living hereabout; for a Christian Church assembles in the quondam theatre, a company of more than five hundred members. The smaller apartments behind what was once the stage, now serve as a convenient suite of vestries; and while some welcome refreshment is served us from the bar, the Doctor, as the recognised pastor, occupies a separate room, where first one and then another enter to ask for advice, or to profit by religious conversation. One of the most remarkable visitors of the evening was a blind boy, whom we previously noticed at the Home. The poor fellow's features appeared as if illumined with joy while he made application for permission to join himself with the company of God's people. Many pointed questions were put to him as to the reasons prompting his wishes, and the ready answers given showed that he had arrived at clear views of gospel truth since the date of his being taken from the streets.

The large hall of 'The Edinburgh Castle' is now thrown open nightly, seven nights a week, the attractions being prayer-meetings, sermons, and lectures. It was my privilege to hear a gentleman deliver one of J. B. Gough's orations, seventy minutes in length, and without once deigning to consult either note or book. This speech was, moreover, given with an oratorical flourish and power of mimicry such as would have delighted the teetotal champion himself when in the prime of his vigour

twenty years ago. As large a proportion as ninety per cent., or even more, of the congregation meeting in the hall are voluntary abstainers from intoxicating drinks, no pledge being required of them, and no pressure used. What is the spiritual and moral influence centring in 'The Edinburgh Castle,' since its singular 'change of management,' may be inferred from the fact that no less than half-a-dozen taverns in the neighbourhood have recently closed their doors, their customers having gone. Thanks, then, to the action of the beer-kings and gin-princes; but who, after hearing this testimony, will say that public-houses do not encourage and foster one another?

The process of collecting funds to meet the expenditure incurred by Christian work, if not the least satisfactory, is the most distasteful part of the philanthropist's calling. This heavy taskwork is wearisome, it is often fought with discouragement, and may even inspire the hopeless pedestrian with despair as he goes his fatiguing rounds. What the amateur collector witnesses of human infirmity in regard to money, is certain to exercise a depressing effect on the mind, though the dreariest day is sure to have its shades relieved by funds springing where and when they are least expected.

The manner in which sufficient funds were obtained for enabling Dr. Barnardo to complete the purchase of 'The Edinburgh Castle,' as the most remarkable circumstance connected with the history of that once famous citadel of Satan, needs another word of explanation. No one beside a man, whose decision of character stimulated him to adopt a bold policy, would ever have achieved so signal a victory over the enemy. The stronghold was a centre of evil influence, corrupting the youth of the neighbourhood surely and rapidly; but the way in which the



SUNDAY MORNINGS IN THE GREAT HALL OF THE 'EDINBURGH CASTLE.'

See page 119.

siege was planned and conducted, revealed the working of a genius not always exemplified in those who fight 'the Lord's battles.' The Rev. H. Grattan Guinness thus referred to the property in the autumn of 1872:—

'The Edinburgh Castle' has an imposing frontage; its situation is open, central, excellent; it contains eighteen rooms; a large drinking saloon, pleasure gardens, and the extensive concert-hall already named. The unexpired lease (thirty-nine years) is offered for £4,000. At present it is used for a trap for souls—a great hell-trap! In company with Mr. Barnardo and Miss Macpherson, I glanced into it one evening this week, when the tent-meeting was over. We had come from the midst of a congregation assembled to hear the Word of God; but within that hall we saw *another congregation* gathered for a very different purpose. Men, women, and boys were there in hundreds, yielding themselves to the evil influences of a low harangue from a black man, on a platform at the further end. We did not, dared not, stay to listen to his words. We saw enough to convince us of the true character of the place. Now here is a glorious opportunity of striking a blow for Christ. *Here is a Satanic stronghold. A mission-hall is wanted immediately just where it stands. That stronghold of Satan can be obtained for money, and changed into a mission-hall.* Who will do it for us?

Only last night some lads said to the friend I have mentioned, while standing outside 'The Edinburgh Castle,' 'Ah, Mr. Barnardo, hope you're going to smash up this place!' 'Why do you hope so?' was asked. 'Because it's doing so much mischief to us lads,' was their reply. May their hope, poor lads, be realised; and may that concert-hall resound soon with the praises of Jesus!

During the summer months of 1872 a large tent, wherein a large congregation assembled, was erected near 'The Edinburgh Castle;' and not willing to relinquish the gospel services when the fine weather ceased, a large room was sought that would accommodate the preachers and their congregations during the winter months. Such a meeting-place it was not easy to find. There was 'The Edinburgh Castle' itself; and though he had refused to let his commodious hall for public worship, fearing

his trade would be affected thereby, the proprietor was about to sell his lease to the highest bidder. The gin-palace was duly advertised to be sold by auction; but not caring even to risk losing his object, Dr. Barnardo privately offered £4,200 for the house, and the offer being accepted, he at once paid down £840 deposit. The remainder of the purchase-money would have to be paid within a fortnight from the time of selling, a period of fourteen days being allowed for the examination of legal documents. At the time of handing over the first instalment, no more than £2,865 10s. 6d. could have been commanded, and were the remainder not forthcoming on a certain day, the bargain would become void. The purchase, however, had been boldly made, and funds continued to pour in until the day of settlement, when the stock of money amounted to £4,090. An hour before the time fixed for concluding the transfer, a gentleman appeared on the scene, and asked permission to be allowed to fire a last shot at the falling stronghold, the weight of his missile being 'a hundred-pounder.' The money now amounted to £4,190, and the time was short. A quarter of an hour after the discharge of the 'hundred-pounder,' a welcome donation of £10 arrived, making up the sum required, and leaving about £100 in promises to go towards the funds still required for providing fittings. Anything more remarkable than this—the way in which money came to hand, both in large and small sums, for the promotion of a great cause—has perhaps never before occurred in the experience of any volunteer philanthropist in London. The bargain was agreed on, but that agreement did not ensure possession. Eagerly watching the proceedings, there stood another would-be purchaser, who desired that the Christian party might yet be unable to keep their engagements. Then the

music-hall proprietor's longings would also be shared by the publican himself, because, too late, he had discovered that, had he kept the property an hour longer, he might have secured an advance of £500 in the price. It was an exciting season to all concerned.

What, in the meantime, were the mental distresses of the beer-kings and gin-princes, if indeed these considerable personages are subject to the common-place passions of humanity? We cannot even estimate their distresses, but only suppose that the unlooked-for trial was hard to bear. They might well be chagrined when they saw themselves outwitted by a mere doctor of medicine—by one who, to serve his purpose, had made himself familiar with the 'ins and outs' of 'the trade.' The contest, however, had been conducted in an honest and open manner, the grand result being, that a house heretofore devoted to the interests of Satan—the famous 'Edinburgh Castle'—was wrested from the possession of those who, for the sake of pelf, had degraded themselves, and had encompassed the ruin of many victims.

X.

A Good Friday Soiree at 'The Edinburgh Castle.'

CHAPTER X.

A GOOD FRIDAY SOIRÉE AT 'THE EDINBURGH CASTLE.'*

LIMEHOUSE and the adjacent parishes bordering on the Thames and the Regent's Canal are not places sought out by respectable London, except on occasions of imperative necessity. To many the vicinity is literally *terra incognita*, a social desert, full of lurking dangers, both to the inexperienced and the wary. The main thoroughfares are sufficiently sombre and forbidding, while the damp, narrow little bye-streets are supposed to be the chosen retreats of brawling and crime. It is there that cheats and sharpers of every grade are expected to be found. Land-sharks flourish there as they flourish nowhere else, and 'Jack ashore' is the welcome bait they are ever seeking. Often have the sorrows of this sin-stricken district been portrayed, and while becoming acquainted with the characters of the giants in iniquity who here find dens wherein to carry on their desperate professions, one has realised that sensational writing may mean truthful descriptions of real life. Truth may be terrible, or even appalling, when unadorned with the paltry art

* I prepared this article for the columns of a London weekly newspaper, and reproduce it here in order that the reader may be enabled to form a correct idea of the kind of festivals which are held in a now famous institution, from time to time.

of the sensationalist; and I am sorry to say that 'special commissioners' are apt to do no higher service than that of caricaturing the miseries of the poor when visiting the lowest districts. They dilate on the dark side of the picture, and almost ignore the existence of the powerful Christian agencies which in these days never relax in their efforts to raise the needy and the wicked from their low estate.

In darker times, and not more remote than four years ago, one of the leading institutions of Limehouse was 'The Edinburgh Castle.' Situated in a dark and thickly-populated parish, this said tavern was regarded as a very citadel of Satan, by both pastors and missionaries, who looked in despair on the evil influence which frustrated their efforts and centred on one plague-spot. Scenes were witnessed in the large theatre attached, such as were calculated to corrupt the young and harden the old in iniquity. Then there were drinking-gardens, with their booths, and the doings there were too bad to be described. Taken as a whole, 'The Edinburgh Castle' resembled a hell upon earth, and was regarded as such by numbers of the poor persons themselves, who by no means viewed the aspect of affairs from the Christian's standpoint.

Now that this famous tavern has 'changed hands,' however, its future history will be within fairer lines. When the right day came for the daring experiment to be carried out, the missionary party, with Dr. Barnardo at their head, successfully besieged the citadel, and having gained a signal victory over the enemy, all that belonged to the kingdom of darkness was rased to the ground, and now the Christian standard is lifted on high. To judge by appearances, Limehouse rejoices in the change, for '*The Castle*' was perhaps never before so popular as now. In

the truest and best sense, the concern is under a popular management, and the leading feature of the programme is the gospel itself.

East-enders love tea-meetings, and a feast of this kind at 'The Edinburgh Castle' comes with a special claim on their affections. They reckon on a handsome entertainment, and are never disappointed. They meet their friends, enjoy an opportunity of talking themselves 'dry,' and are certain to see and hear something that will please them. Then, beside all this, they sit down for once in a way with real gentlewomen, who preside at the urns, and converse with the guests in that unrestrained manner which even the common people know how to appreciate. They are pleased also with the well-bred attentions which they receive from persons in some instances ranking among the higher class. Of these festivals which the lieges of Limehouse attend at 'The Edinburgh Castle,' there are several kinds. There is the 'free tea,' which did something towards earning for this coffee palace its present high reputation; but these are virtually abolished. There is the sixpenny, or cost-price tea, a very popular entertainment, and one certain to command a full house. Lastly, there is the more costly kind of feast, such as I sat down to on Good Friday, the uniform charge being tenpence a head; and, of course, this is served up with a splendour such as can only be attempted on high days and holidays. Some few persons will be hindered from coming by the comparatively expensive tickets, but not a few of the very poor class will make an effort to attend. On Good Friday the quondam theatre presented a most pleasing scene, the long rows of tables having been crowded with guests of all grades, from the well-to-do tradesman to the humble occupant of the humblest

lodging. Indeed, the spectacle, as seen from the gallery, was very striking, the long rows of tables, with their ample supplies of viands and glittering urns, reminding one of the Guildhall on the feast-day of the year. More pleasing still were the cheers which greeted the good Doctor Barnardo when he entered the assembly, about six o'clock, and the signs which immediately followed, that the visitors' enjoyment of the occasion was as real as their friends desired it to be.

Tea being finished, and the seats rearranged, about sixteen hundred persons soon crowd the hall, the large assembly being attracted by a tempting programme. The 'gifted blind performers' of music are popular favourites, as they deserve to be, for they acquit themselves well, and draw forth loud expressions of approval from the delighted audience. There are about a score of these afflicted people, and, besides being accomplished singers, some of them can also recite in a very effective manner. The audience itself is also allowed to take part in the singing, and does so with much spirit, *e.g.*:—

If you cannot, in the harvest,
  Gather up the richest sheaf,
Many a grain, both ripe and golden,
  Will the careless reapers leave.
Go and glean among the briars,
  Growing rank against the wall,
For it may be that their shadow
  Hides the heaviest wheat of all.

The cries of sundry babies scattered among the audience mingle with the music, but do not greatly interrupt the harmony.

More important than the singing, perhaps, was the address of Mr. Haslam, the rector of Mayfair, who adapted his speech to the circumstances of the situation in an admirable manner.

Though racy and overflowing with anecdote, he can put his hand in his pocket, and talk to the people in an easy, conversational way. One cannot listen to the rector without being impressed with the fact that he is a man of earnestness and piety. Were every rector able to bring the gospel before the common people in a like plain and zealous manner, the Church of England would indeed become a mighty power in the nation. He feels what he says, and speaks with the power and authority of a man who has experienced the inward testimony of the Spirit to the truth of the message he proclaims.

Taking it as a whole, the proceedings at 'The Edinburgh Castle,' on Good Friday, were of a kind to delight the Christian heart. That a vast public-house, a very centre of corruption, should have been suddenly transformed into the home of a large Christian Church and Mission-station, is at least a significant sign of the times: and that the £4,200 necessary for purchasing the lease should have been collected in three weeks by one man, will show that England is not yet destitute of generous hearts.

XI.

The Wood-Choppers.

X.

A Good Friday Soiree at 'The Edinburgh Castle.'

fingers left, shows that he appreciates the goodness which has raised him from the gutter to a respectable station in life.

The work is done by the 'piece,' and, thus stimulated to make the most of their time, habits of industry are engendered in the boys. The wood has to be sawn, chopped, and tied, and hence again an advantage is gained by working in couples; 'a man,' —a hobbledehoy some would call him—taking for a mate a small person about whose juvenility no mistake can possibly be made. The operator seats himself before a block, and with a chopper in one hand he seizes with the other a lump of wood, when the instrument flashes half a dozen times in mid-air, and the piece is divided into broad slices, which in turn, and altogether, are again struck crossways by the broad blade, and are thus divided into, say a hundred sticks. The 'man' before the block sees no fear, and to this sense of security he partly owes his immunity from accident. He aims straight at the mark, and never misses. If the lads are proud of their skill, they have attained to something like perfection in their art, and having done so by persevering practice, they have as much reason for exultation as others of more pretentious professions whose success has not been proportionately great.

'The Wood-chopping Brigade' represents a very successful section of Dr. Barnardo's work, and having, like other departments of the Mission, gradually assumed its present proportions, the work will still extend, both in magnitude and importance. The trade was begun in a cautious manner, in the first instance having been carried on in very humble premises near the present wharf. The day of small things has now passed: the manager is enabled to charter his own vessels, and mountains of pinewood rear their summits high above the black waters of

the Regent's Canal. The ample stock, however, occasions no uneasiness, for, while thirty thousand bundles are disposed of every week on the average, the most extensive stores would speedily melt away were there no fleet ships on the ocean to bring in fresh supplies.

I was not surprised on discovering that the laws which govern the production of fire-wood, or more properly its preparation for the market, are very precise, and are not allowed to be violated for any consideration. The length of the sticks must be six inches, neither more nor less, and the measurement is strictly adhered to in all cases. The vast piles of pinewood occupying spaces in the yard, and which have come direct from the forests of Norway and Sweden, are all exactly measured, piece by piece, before exportation. The lengths represent what wood-choppers call 'waste,' and these are outsides and other surplus pieces cut away from the more valuable timber also sent to England for building purposes. To the eye of the casual visitor, the piles of 'waste' appear to be built of lengths representing many odd measurements; but these will cut into pieces of the prescribed six inches, and should there chance to be an inch over measure in any instance, even this is cut away and reckoned as 'waste' in a more literal sense.

Many of the lads who are brought up to this employment, and who, when taken in charge at an early age, are now verging on manhood. They are also competent to earn wages such as enable them to do something towards helping needy ones at home, besides supporting themselves. Remembering their former condition, they are naturally proud of the advances already made in their social life, and it is hoped they are correspondingly grateful to those who have, by God's blessing, aided them in stepping

upwards and heavenwards. In itself, wood-chopping is a sufficiently humble employment; but how far removed is simple honest work from the gutter-rompings and home squalor of former years? The boys have found work to be a bracing thing, and receiving the ample remuneration of tenpence for every hundred bundles cut and tied, they are in receipt of an income which places them among the well-to-do of their class. The total earnings of the corps during the past year was £3,165 14s. 6d.

The wood-chopping scheme is, commercially speaking, a success; but were that all, there would not remain much to boast about. So much wood bought and sold, and a given amount of money gained, would not alone represent the success striven after and prayed for by the boys' friends. Every one of the wood-choppers has a soul, and it was to be instrumental in saving that soul from death, through Christ, that the boy was first sought in the bye-ways of London, to be trained for something better than a wasted life. May each one live a life of honesty, industry, and sobriety, and live to die triumphantly in the good hope, in life and death exemplifying the truth of the precept which tells us that 'Wisdom holds life in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour.'

XII.

The City Messenger Brigade.

CHAPTER XII.

THE CITY MESSENGER BRIGADE.

BESIDES the wood-choppers and artisans in other trades in course of training under Dr. Barnardo at Stepney-causeway, there is a corps of boys known as the City Messenger Brigade. These are also in thriving circumstances, if we consider from what they have been rescued. They should be viewed as a body of useful public servants, valued because possessing the confidence of those who employ them, and who appreciate the advantages of their situation. This corps is as yet in its infancy, being no more than four years old, but the boys have wonderfully succeeded in attracting the patronage of City firms who require just the kind of accommodation now offered. These lads, says Dr. Barnardo, 'are for the most part selected from the better class attending our free day and Sunday-schools, and many have, through the means of the Brigade, obtained good and lucrative situations in various parts of the metropolis.' The largest sum yet earned in one year has been £1,650 13s. 8d.

The City messenger is now a necessity of commerce in common with the post-office and the electric telegraph, and with neither of the great national institutions can he be said to come directly into competition. He may justly be regarded as a lad who unites

in his own person a combination of useful traits proved by experience to be extremely marketable. Morning by morning he takes his stand at a well-known spot in a crowded centre of business, so that no difficulty is ever experienced in finding him. He executes small commissions with greater despatch than the post-office or even the telegraph can rival, and, when a large number of circulars have to be distributed, with greater economy. The same remarks apply to small and valuable parcels, which the faithful messenger carries to their destination with a promptitude such as no mere 'delivery' could ensure.

Dr. Barnardo has conferred a lasting boon on the poor boys who come under his notice, by marshalling this brigade, and his reasons for trying the novel experiment were marked by strong common sense, and were also characteristic of a man who is constantly watching for opportunities in his appointed work. It was noticed 'that great difficulty is generally experienced in obtaining respectable, honest, and trustworthy messengers for the immediate conveyance of small parcels and general messages at cheap rates;' and it was obvious that great numbers of lads were leading listless, aimless lives, who would be glad to enter these offered openings in the commercial world, were a friend forthcoming to train and direct them. The Doctor resolved on becoming the friend-in-need, and prepared his plans accordingly. In the first place it was necessary that the boys should possess character, and some other qualifications, which would secure the confidence of employers, while encouraging their schoolmasters. Trustworthy boys alone, or those believed to be such, would be sent out, and these would be certified by the secretary. It was arranged that the little band should wear a becoming uniform, and should be disciplined in

certain rules respecting deportment in business hours, and behaviour in general, all of which they are now compelled to observe, or forfeit a penalty few would dare to risk. It is believed by their friends that the Christian training these boys are constantly receiving in their leisure hours is the best guarantee of their integrity; but to give additional satisfaction, responsible householders warrant the honesty of each individual to the amount of ten pounds. Thus far the boys have done well, by really supplying a public want, and by giving satisfaction to those who have been the means of affording them a start in life.

The bye-laws of the brigade oblige the messengers to do business at fixed rates, and these are extremely reasonable. A letter or parcel is carried a distance of two miles for fourpence, an additional twopence being charged if the packet exceeds seven pounds in weight, and is under fourteen pounds. For larger distances special bargains are made, it being understood that no fee less than a shilling will be accepted in these instances. If it be preferred, the boys may be hired at the rate of threepence per hour, two shillings a day, or ten shillings and sixpence per week. To many aspiring youths this humble occupation is an introduction to honest life, for, as frequently as openings occur, the most deserving boys are drafted off into permanent situations.

That the messengers should be regarded with much favour by the founder of their order, will not surprise those who know their character. They resemble the picked men of a 'crack' regiment, and knowing that much is required of them, each boy would blush to bring dishonour on his colours. A boy who enters this brigade makes one of the best of beginnings in

commercial life, and has as many chances in his favour as many once had who have risen to high positions, to be a blessing, and to command respect. A boy who distinguishes himself in this service will be certain to win favour, and to win favour is to ensure advancement among those princely mercantile potentates, who, notwithstanding their seeming indifference, still harbour a liking for honesty, thriftiness, and Christian sobriety. I repeat that the Christian training of these boys is the best guarantee of their life success.

Having so well succeeded in this and other kindred undertakings, Dr. Barnardo still desires to press forward to yet further achievements. He would select boys and put them in training for the merchant service, and hence he says that 'a training ship, by means of which many of our lads may be trained for the mercantile marine, would be a very desirable acquisition.' This is so true, that the Government would doubtless be glad to hand over an old man-of-war vessel, which should be used for so noble a purpose, and Lord Shaftesbury has undertaken to present a petition to the reigning authorities. Soon, therefore, we may expect to see the Mission extend its dominion, even to the bosom of Old Father Thames.

XIII.

The Great Tent.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GREAT TENT.

CONSIDERABLE prejudice exists in the minds of mere ecclesiastics against such arts as are in favour with people who wish by all lawful means to reach the masses, and bring them to Christ. A church is to such a Holy of Holies—the only place in which respectable persons would wish to be converted. Consecrated buildings become sacred places, and religion is in danger of degenerating into a morbid reverence for the house, whilst He is lost sight of for whose service the house is provided. Even Dr. Johnson called somebody 'a pious man,' because he never passed a church without first taking off his hat; and Wesley had to conquer hereditary prejudices before he went out to preach in the fields and highways of England. The sacerdotalist cultivates a fondness for clerical dresses, carved screens, and sensuous architecture, and somehow seems to associate the mason's, the carpenter's, and the upholsterer's arts with salvation. The Reverend Mr. Candlelight, who is one of the most far-gone in this singular enthusiasm, eyes all things through the green spectacles of his delusion, harbouring little charity for 'sects' who differ from him; and if the church be a holy place, he thinks that 'priests' alone are invested

with authority to officiate in the charmed enclosure. A clergyman lately reproved certain parishioners because they had actually entered *a tent* to hear a man preach 'in corduroy.' What is this but teaching that a house not architecturally correct and properly consecrated is no place for prayer, and that one whose cloth is not of the ecclesiastical standard is a pseudo-preacher of the gospel? Were the case less serious, we might say it was contemptible affectation.

What will such persons say to our arch-innovator, Dr. Barnardo, who must be a great transgressor indeed, if sin be mixed up with tent services? Within a few yards of 'The Edinburgh Castle,' there stands a kind of summer, or canvas church—a fragile structure, which a recent gale laid level with the ground, and which consequently had to be rebuilt, but one capable, nevertheless, of accommodating nearly four thousand persons, most of whom belong to a class who remain unreached by the Ritualistic services of Mr. Candlelight, and also by the best endeavours of more enlightened preachers. Having been erected specially for their benefit, the poor people feel that the novel sanctuary is their own; they feel quite satisfied with its homely accommodation, and they will not frequent finer buildings where this sense of comfort is wanting.

The Tent services were inaugurated by Mr. Spurgeon last May, and understanding that Sunday, the 8th of November, would be the last of the season, I repaired thither on that occasion, to make one of the motley throng who sit at the feet of Joshua Poole and other preachers. The afternoon was cold and foggy, but arriving at the fast-closed 'Edinburgh Castle' at five o'clock, there were warmth, cheerfulness, and a welcome found within, a 'tea' being provided for a number of friends from a distance.

No lady being present, the chair was taken by a gentleman who has long been regarded as one of Dr. Barnardo's ablest coadjutors, and has himself achieved some laurels in literature as an amateur author. There were several young persons present, some soldiers, and a gentleman who had a 'twinge' in his arm which puzzled the doctors; so that finding plenty to say as well as enough to eat, we came to the conclusion that doctors know less than their patients think they know. Some singing followed, and then in walked Joshua Poole, the veritable 'Fiddler Joss,' of whom I had heard much but had never seen. He is a man slightly above the middle height, with features so softened by religion, that their expression must be a pleasing contrast to the original hardness of years gone by; and he would probably be stout were it not for the active exercise of preaching, which in this case is ever attended by copious perspiration. Reference being made to his departed wife, he speaks of her as 'my dear one,' until tears fill his eyes, and oblige him to retire. It is always thus, I am told—Joshua always breaks down if you speak to him about his wife.

We now adjourn to the tent, the approaches to which are illuminated by a large brilliant gas star, the interior being also lighted by a number of flaming stars and circles. The fog has partially cleared away, but a murky atmosphere fills the wide area, being quite in keeping with the many sad, as well as sin-hardened, faces abounding in the vast congregation. One perceives at a glance that the people are all of the poorer sort, the classes most difficult to reach; and that so mighty a host should be drawn together at such a time, and for such a purpose, speaks something for the uncultured eloquence of 'the working man's preacher.' There are numbers who are well

dressed — thrifty, and therefore well-to-do; there are poor women, who still manage to present a semi-respectable appearance on Sunday, in spite of scanty means and drunken husbands; there, indeed, are the very transgressors themselves, coaxed by feminine tongues to forego the tavern for once in favour of 'Fiddler Joss;' and, to complete the category, there is a sprinkling of soldiers and babies—the last, who have strong lungs, doing their part to enliven the scene. There is singing going on when we enter, for to sit listless and silent is utterly distasteful to the East-Ender, even on Sunday. But hush, hush! the service now begins, and the hymn, 'Christ for me,' is given out, and heartily sung, the words being clearly discernible:—

> Your gold will waste and wear away,
> Your honours perish in a day;
> My portion never can decay—
> Christ for me.

A friend who prays asks God that the meeting may be a 'sin-killing, soul-stirring one.' Another reads—the same gentleman who did the honours of the tea-table at 'The Edinburgh Castle'—for, worn by the heavy service of the summer, Joshua is glad of any relief in the way of assistance. The reading of the Bible amid such associations makes up a scene no less striking than solemn, and one worthy of the pencil of any artist who could worthily render what Hogarth would have delighted to depict. There is a rustling as of a thousand leaves, when we are told to 'turn to the Psalms,'—a pleasing indication that Bibles are not scarce even among the poorest of East-Enders. The people seem to drink in the words of the old Hebrew Psalmist as though they were a new revelation; and to appropriate the fresh, pointed comments, as something

directly concerning themselves. I wish those who are sceptical in regard to these extraordinary efforts on behalf of the masses, could have listened to that Bible-reading in the Great Tent.

Now, however, comes the sermon. It has been intimated that Joshua Poole is an uneducated speaker, but he deals in saws that his hearers are not likely to forget. The text is the third chapter of Saint John's Gospel, and under that broad heading a great many things affecting the working man are treated of in a discursive manner. There are no divisions, and he frequently falls back on himself for an illustration of the power of Divine grace which was magnified in that 'drunken, blaspheming old fiddler.' People are called upon to love the Bible, because museums will never be opened on Sundays while working men stand by their Bibles, and the Bible in the pawn-shop will rise up in judgment against them. Then comes a description of Eden, in what some would think rather grandiloquent language, but to judge fairly we must remember what kind of audience is listening to the speaker. Adam and Eve, we are told, did not take to tailoring until after they had sinned; and a Romish priest would have been denied admission to Noah's Ark, because he would have applied for admission without a wife. Reference is also made to human learning, or 'garret knowledge,' which, though good in itself, can never save a soul. The anecdotes, of which there is an abundant store, are also effectively told, and provoke responses from the audience such as 'Bless me;' or, 'That's true;' 'Yes, that's *quite* true.'

A well-dressed man once came up to the preacher after a certain service, with, 'How do you do, Mr. Poole?'

'You've the advantage of me, sir. I don't know you,' was the reply.

'Not know *me*? not remember So-and-so?'

All was made plain. The man used to be a ragged drunken fellow in the north, but was now reformed and was well clothed. 'Why, man, you've moulted!' cried Joshua. An affecting incident is related of a child who lost his life through being sent for a pint of beer; but even more telling was the case of a boy who had a drunken father and a pious mother. The youngster for a time promised well, but being compelled to drink by the abandoned man, he at length gave way to loose habits, was sent into penal servitude for seven years, and at the expiration of the term found that his father had cut his throat, while his mother had gone he knew not whither. He planned another robbery, entered a certain house, and finding an old woman in bed in one of the rooms, he murdered her, to discover, when he held the light to her face, that she was his own mother! The robber uttered a shriek of despair, and fell down a corpse! The telling of this anecdote visibly affected the congregation, and, as Joshua told me after the service, there were a good many drunkards present. This being the case, he perceived his opportunity, and, like a wise general, took full advantage of it.

From what has been said it must not be inferred that the Great Tent is a mere temperance preaching station. Temperance is made quite a secondary thing—the gospel being accepted as the sovereign cure for drunkenness as well as for all other human ills. Joshua Poole's sermon abounded with stirring appeals and scripture quotations which have been left unmentioned. I am glad to believe that he glories far more in preaching Christ than in advocating total abstinence from intoxicating drinks. He deserves the distinction he claims of being 'The working man's preacher.'

The strongest plea in favour of the Tent is that people have professed to receive blessing at every service, and I noticed that the preacher walked away to the inquirers' room after finishing his sermon. It is something also to know that in a notorious gin-drinking neighbourhood three thousand pledges have been taken in two years. The Great Tent has been graced by the presence of Lord Shaftesbury, Mr. Samuel Morley, a number of noblemen and gentlemen too numerous to mention, besides many ministers of various denominations. We do not then dispise the Great Tent, since eminent men, both lay and clerical, both Anglicans and Dissenters, have shaken hands beneath the canvas roof, and on a platform broad enough for all. Extraordinary agencies like this can alone be expected to reach the teeming population of London, and who will dare to look on superciliously while God is blessing the work?

XIV.

The Home for Neglected and Destitute Girls.

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THE HOME FOR NEGLECTED AND DESTITUTE GIRLS.

THE boy as we have shown him, at his best and worst, is one thing, the waif's female counterpart is another. Her case is often more deplorable and more difficult to relieve. It is not always easy to find the street-girl a situation in the world, for there are a hundred things for boys to do to one which would suit a girl. Boys can black boots in the street, join a messenger brigade, enter into training for the naval or merchant service, or learn various handicrafts; but to the girl the door to all these is permanently closed, her sex alone seeming to constitute a crowning misfortune. Who has not seen and pitied her, alone, unfriended, the victim of temptation. Shoeless, bonnetless, and wearing a tattered gown, she has none of the charms which make up female loveliness, yet she has several characteristics which mark her out as capable of excelling in better things. She surprises you with her cunning, but it is cunning of an animal kind. You look into her face, and if wanting in artlessness, the eyes look like those of persons old in sin. She is early initiated into the art of begging and deceit. Whether the season be fine or inclement, she runs hither and thither, worrying passengers with a persevering impudence such as boys might

despair of copying, and her stock arguments are a broom and a box of fusees. Glancing at her as you hurry along, you learn to pity her, as well you may. What a life has hers been! Ere she ran alone she was nourished with beer and gin, and hence a craving for stimulants became part of her nature. As she approaches womanhood, if not rescued, her language is foul and deceptive, her education having been little better than a discipline in sin. Do we relinquish hope while asking, What shall be done with her? Only let her alone, and she will ripen into one of the chief curses of the city, her fate appearing the more shocking when contrasted with what might have been had she been subjected to a different rearing. Let her alone, and you inflict an undeserved wrong; but, though chief sufferer, the street-girl will not live unavenged: she will ruin others, as she falls lower and yet lower. It were wise, then, not to leave her alone. Rather take her from the school of the streets, and place her in the school of thrift and Christian discipline. The lines of womanliness are never entirely effaced: you may think that her best instincts are dead, but they are merely shrivelled through exposure to evil influence. Hundreds of such have been reclaimed, and have become by the grace of God true-hearted women, an honour to the Church and a blessing to their future associates.

The improvidence of the lower orders is a master hindrance to their social elevation. Could we teach them thrift we should introduce them to new enjoyments and new opportunities, while the young would less frequently be dependent on charity for their start in life. I refer especially to girls. A thrifty girl is a benefactor to her country, while a slattern is a *burden* to herself and others; and this fact is so well under-

stood by Dr. Barnardo, that he hopes to be as great a friend to girls as he has heretofore been to boys. It is hoped that no girls who will henceforth pass through the Home at Ilford will be either bad housewives or indifferent companions. We must aim high would we secure a large reward, and here we have a field of labour, as well as of promise, of which we shall do well to take advantage. Immense service will be rendered to the community if female street wanderers can be transformed into well-trained domestic servants. Unattractive as they are, these girls will be the life-companions of men in a coming generation, and if their husbands are expected to appreciate home, home will need to be something different from what the girls themselves have known. Incompetent housewives are among the sorest evils of our day. Even when in receipt of ample means the slatternly wife fails to make the best of what she has, and this is traceable to defective early training, or to no training at all. The education of poor girls must be of a kind to yield the best results. The plan adopted by Dr. Barnardo at the Ilford Home, where each girl will be thoroughly prepared for service, is the most effective of its kind, if indeed it be not unique. I have heard of a pastor in Cheshire who founded a kitchen for educational purposes. The girls were taught to cook for the sick and poor, and thus he conferred a large amount of benefit on needy parishioners, with an income of less than a hundred pounds a year. Such examples show how much may be done with but little means where common sense is allowed to rule.

While looking into these things we shall learn that children do not become vagrant or criminal because they are poor and unfortunate, but because of evil youthful associations. They

lapse into evil courses because no other path is open to them. Then the workhouse is scarce a less formidable enemy to these hapless creatures than the streets, for in workhouse schools no habits either of self-help or of self-reliance are inculcated, and the results are often most deplorable. Workhouse schools are becoming more and more notorious on account of their bad moral influence, while the quality of the education imparted is for the most part contemptible. We have heard of a large assembly of wretched children being superintended by an old man, a quondam convict, who had sought refuge in the only place wherein he could enjoy a free lodging. The personal history of those who are victims of what we rather affectedly call the great social evil carries them back to the workhouse. There they learn their first lessons in immorality, and find a path prepared which leads to their subsequent fall.

The girl-waif left to shift for herself is perhaps the most pitiable object in creation, and if she be driven by misery into vicious courses, she deserves pity as well as reproof. In what her suffering frequently consists, may be inferred from a teacher's adventure, thus narrated in the organ of the Ragged School Union :—

One day when I was passing through St. Giles's, a man stopped me and said, 'If you please, sir, there is a girl sleeping under the stairs of No. — in the court.' This court is inhabited by Irish labourers, costermongers, army workers, coal porters, and others of the same class. When night came I went to see whether the girl was in her lair. It being quite dark, I asked one of the inmates of the house to lend me his candle, that I might seek for the lost one. 'God bless me, sir,' replied he, 'no girl sleeps *there*.' 'I am told there is,' was my answer. 'Why, sir, don't I live in the house, and I have not seen any girl,' said he. 'Never mind,' I responded, 'I will go and see.' Away we went, down—down the dark and dirty stairs—he carrying a flaring candle in his hand. When we got opposite the cellar door we found a kind of dog-hole. Having seen it before, I knew it was nearly

filled with ashes, oyster shells, rotten vegetables, old hampers, and other filthy accumulations. I pulled open the door, and as my companion held his candle over my head, I gazed into the awful den. There was the girl! She looked like a heap of rags and tangled hair. As the light fell on her sleeping form her heavy breathing ceased, a deep sigh came from her lips, and then she moved—moved, moved until she rose—and crouching on her hands and feet, she glared at me through her hair, which fell streaming over her face and neck. She had such an unearthly and fearful look, that my companion gave a loud cry of horror and sprang back. Speaking gentle and soothing words, I held out my hand, and when she took it I drew her out of the 'horrible pit.' When I had got her out I found her torpid with cold and faint with hunger, she having slept there for two weeks, and been twenty-four hours without food. I immediately obtained her something to eat, then found her warm lodgings in the room of a poor family, and the next morning I had the pleasure of seeing her admitted into a girls' dormitory.

The extreme need of such subjects constitutes their claim, and they appeal loudest when rags, misery, and ignorance speak for themselves. Were these children's shocking ignorance of morality, and of God, disguised by goodly coverings, we might perhaps turn aside with indifference; but the guilt is ours if we do so when the sunken cheeks and inflamed eyes of starving children call louder than words. Is it not the sinner's need that prevails with Christ? There was once a gentleman who gave a beggar both clothes and shoes. The man put them on; but as he walked away, the donor thought the man would be a loser by the bounty. That man, however, was wise in his generation. No sooner was he out of sight than he resumed his native rags, thus appearing as woe-begone as before. We learn a lesson from a circumstance like this—need is always the most powerful plea.

Having been so largely blessed in his endeavours to found a Home for working and destitute boys, Dr. Barnardo undertook the task of rearing a similar institution for girls, the honorary

superintendence of which should be handed over to Mrs. Barnardo. I saw a couple of beautifully-formed little creatures who are to be among the first inmates of the new house. Rescue the girls during childhood from the streets, and introduce them into those respectable life-courses now opening up for women everywhere, and the master social curse of our day will be checked at the fountain-head.

Among the photographs published on account of the Home, there is one called 'A Touching Appeal'—'Please'm, do you take in poor little girls?' While looking on this and the counterpart, we perceive what sort of necessity exists for the proposed Home for neglected and destitute girls. The portrait is that of a young creature, bonnetless, and in tattered garments, quite in keeping with her question. In the counterpart the same child appears decently clothed, broom in hand, a personification of a contented maid-of-all-work. Only reach these female waifs as they may be reached, and rescue them as they may be rescued, and you effectively sweep the streets of their defilement of the great social evil. It would seem that the majority of the fallen belong to the ranks of humble life, and many of them confess that their ruinous course was ensured by the immoral associations to which they were exposed at school, more than by mere misfortune. Workhouses and parochial schools, it is feared, are too often seminaries of vice; and if the morals of the inmates were more carefully watched, salvation from bodily ruin, in the instance of many a young creature, would be the result. Success, then, to the proposed Girls' Home. The little homeless girls of London have a first claim on a Christian's regard.

Dr. Barnardo knows something about the trials and anguish

endured by those who pass a brief life of shame upon the streets. He has helped to rescue some of them. He has seen sights such as make the heart bleed—the consumptive girl of tender age wasting away, and the stern-natured matron, in virtuous pride, refusing to acknowledge her erring child as her daughter. If it be lovely to see the humble prizing virtue as a treasure, it is also terrible to see the mother steeling her heart against a daughter on account of sin. It is not possible to say who suffers most poignantly, the sinned against or the sinning.

Dr. Barnardo once encountered a girl of sixteen, in the Hackney-road, and on his speaking kindly to her, she seemed to recognise a sincere friend. Though of tender age, she had well-nigh run the length of a career of shame, the seeds of a fatal disease being already sown in her constitution. Not very long before, she had left her friends, and ashamed to call her by their untarnished name, those friends persisted in reckoning her as among the dead. Anxious to be of service to the already death-stricken girl, the Doctor took down her address, and shortly after she was taken in a cab to her mother's lodging. Before she knew that her child waited in the street, the woman replied with the grief and indignation of a broken heart. She had no children, not one was left; all were either dead or worse than dead! What could a stranger do but half sympathise with the unyielding pride of womanly virtue? But he had a mission to accomplish, as delicate as it was momentous. Was there no chord in the mother's heart to be touched, one that would reveal a mother's strength as well as her weakness? She overflowed with indignant shame; she was ready to invoke curses on the

heads of those who had brought dishonour on her family, until the daughter was mentioned by name, and then, what a change! The mother's heart conquered the woman's pride; and in an instant, as if an unseen power had transformed her into another being, both heart and arms were opened to receive the sinner! Erring Lizzie laid herself down in her mother's bed to die; but not before she was enabled to touch the hem of Christ's garment, by Him to be made perfectly whole. Soon afterwards the mother joined her daughter in that land of promise wherein nothing that defileth can ever enter.

One can easily understand why in his earliest philanthropic experiments Dr. Barnardo should have aimed at benefiting boys alone. His leaning towards boys was not the result of an eccentric preference, nor did it arise from a desire to befriend his own sex, to the ignoring of the need of tender and helpless girls. He set his hand to a work which could be advanced in only by degrees, and for obvious reasons boys seemed to prefer a prior claim on the attention of one who was so well acquainted with their requirements. As street Arabs, they greatly outnumbered the girls, and grieved by what he saw up and down the leading thoroughfares, as well as in the hidden recesses of squalid courts and alleys, the Doctor thought he was called upon to take a share in the work of raising the thousands of juvenile outcasts from their low estate. The Christ-like task was undertaken, and then in due time came a longing to do something on behalf of the sisters of those who had been successfully befriended. The girls also must be gathered in; but though he knew that a home could be filled with little maidens in a month, the day for collecting them *had not yet arrived.* Man may set his heart on doing this or

that, yet he must abide God's time. When the opening was made plain by heaven, the agent was found ready.

The command to proceed came, as it ever does come, at the proper season, and in a way that proved it to be providential. There is at times something akin to inspiration in the manner in which great and good works are suggested to the mind of man. If, on a former occasion, God really sent a message to the heart of His servant by means of a little street rover, He now apparently spoke again through the medium of a homeless female waif. The time was March, and the chill evening wind carried on its bosom the thickly-falling snow. Thinly clothed and bonnetless, a girl approached the door of the Home in Stepney-causeway, to make that heart-touching inquiry, 'Please'm do you take in poor little girls?' The strange visitor was in a dreadful dilemma, and her question had the effect of placing them also in a dilemma who in their hearts longed to befriend such as she, and her sisters in general. But what response could be made under entirely unfortunate circumstances. The Home was for boys exclusively, and no accommodation could be found for candidates of the opposite sex. Perhaps, however, the child had something exceptional to plead, and was therefore not to be summarily dismissed. What did she say? 'Please'm do you take in poor little girls?' Dr. Barnardo himself saw her, and after listening to a story of want and suffering, he resolved on becoming the girl's guardian, and thus made a bold beginning in the second department of the East-End Juvenile Mission.

Hence, Dr. Barnardo's path of duty in regard to neglected girls was plainly marked out, and propitious circumstances of another kind encouraged his proceeding with the work in real earnest.

Questions may have arisen concerning the locality of the proposed Home, and the laws which should characterise its government, but these were set at rest by being satisfactorily answered. A generous-hearted Christian friend stood near, and to him it is owing that a mansion, with extensive grounds, at Ilford, has been handed over to those interested in the work, and on the easiest of terms. In this house, or rather in the buildings now added to the structure, a Training Home for Destitute Girls has been established. The estate occupies a site by the side of an open country road; and while enjoying the fine prospect to be seen from the ample grounds, visitors might suppose themselves to be very far removed from the noise and never-ceasing toil of the great city only a few short miles distant. Divers farming operations, on a small scale, are here carried on, the produce finding a ready market at Stepney-causeway and at 'The Edinburgh Castle.'

After walking over the Institution, which, I trust, is as yet only in its infancy, something might be said about the scrupulous cleanliness reigning throughout each department, and also about the ingenious contrivances contributing to the convenience or comfort of the juvenile inmates. Then the principles which will henceforth direct the government of the household essentially differ from those of most other charities having similar aims. The plan, moreover, will also necessarily differ from that adopted at the Boys' Home; for while boys are speedily drafted into the ranks of those who earn their own bread, girls require a longer and more careful training ere they can be expected to contribute very much towards their own maintenance. Many o the girls are also extremely young, and while their youthfulness *will entail* an extra amount of care and pecuniary outlay being

expended, their characters may, nevertheless, by the blessing of God, become more completely formed according to the Christian standard. Dr. Barnardo makes no secret of the main object ever kept in view, viz., the conversion to God of every child who comes within the circle of his influence: next comes their school and domestic training. The girls in general are intended to go forth into the world, on a future day, as first-class servants, and it is hoped they will really excel in those domestic arts, a proper acquaintance with which reflects so great a lustre on woman. I have not yet seen any training establishment which turns out girls educated in such a manner that they can occupy first-class positions in their profession, and who, accordingly, would not find themselves seriously embarrassed if suddenly transferred into a gentleman's household of the better sort. The system observed at the Ilford Home is expected to prepare candidates who may aspire to the best situations without misgiving or hesitation. The friends of the children look for great things. If their high hopes are realised, and if, besides, their scholars serve their future employers in the fear of God, masters and mistresses will have as much reason to be grateful for a boon supplied, as those more directly concerned for individual benefit received.

Few arguments will be necessary to convince the Christian outsider that an imperative need exists for providing an institution of the useful and beneficent character described. On some accounts the girls require a helping hand to be held out to them even more urgently than do the boys; for, when far gone in the path of ruin, a young female's destruction, to the pitiful eye at least, is more dreadful than anything this world presents. Some observant persons will perhaps have noticed that girls do not

roam about the streets quite after the fashion of the boys; that is to say, they are not found in such large numbers. But this seeming anomaly is explained by the fact that girls of tender age are more highly prized than boys by tramps or itinerant beggars. Being of considerable money value, the little creatures are readily hired by impostors, who, from infancy, subject their charge to treatment not of the kindest, and they also take care to introduce them to all the mysteries and arts of their nefarious practices.

Now these children, while they remain young, represent so much valuable material, and capable of being moulded into characters who in future years may rank high among one of the most useful classes of the community. What are our desires respecting them? Shall they become the easy victims of those who will prepare them for a life of shame? After lapsing into crooked courses, shall they, in turn, themselves become tempters of others? Or would we, on the contrary, save them in time, and transform them into characters such as are ornaments to their sex and treasures in the household—such servants, indeed, as not only command high wages in the open market, but are eagerly engaged by would-be employers. If left to themselves, these girls of the street will undoubtedly be taken possession of by those who will train them in practices of evil, and the scholars of such people are not likely to turn out better than their schoolmasters. Dr. Barnardo, and his friends who have provided the Home at Ilford, would have even the waifs rescued from the purlieus of vice to attain unto something noble in life, and, happily, their aspirations may yet be abundantly realised. With the means at their disposal, and having their efforts crowned with the blessing of God, they may achieve all they

seek, and it is believed that they who are subjected to the training imposed by wise disciplinarians will not disappoint the great expectations entertained concerning them.

Perhaps some persons will question whether an urgent necessity exists for providing a reclaiming agency like the one founded at Ilford, seeing a large provision is already made in workhouses and their schools for the neglected children in our midst. Are such persons, however, really correctly acquainted with the true character of workhouse society? It would be a happy thing did workhouse schools answer the good end had in view by the Legislature. This, unfortunately, they fail to do; and the prejudices of poor people against 'Unions' are not prejudices merely, they are objections founded on bases of truth. Workhouses are not what they ought to be under a Christian government; and hence, when we see outcast mothers clinging to their bare homes with the pertinacity of despair, and without being able to give well-defined reasons for their action, we half believe that they are directed by a God-implanted instinct. To young persons, before whom the world is just opening, workhouses and workhouse schools are little better than seminaries of vice; and they who go forth from them to enter upon the untried path of life have their minds fully furnished with what contributes to their turning aside into wicked courses. We need not go far to seek testimony condemnatory of the impure moral atmosphere pervading the juvenile wards of workhouses, for an unanswerable array of witnesses against them is found in those last retreats of ruined women, the hospital wards. There may be found dying girls—victims of what our pseudo-delicacy calls the great social evil, but for which the Bible has a more terrible name—who testify to the corrupt influences that polluted their early

youth, and occasioned their becoming readily ensnared by the sin of subsequent years. All this happened while, as children, the helpless creatures were under the protection of guardians who professed to be controlled by the beneficent laws of Christianity.

I am not aware, however, that what are to them solid objections to the workhouse, based on grounds of moral consideration, really influence persons in the lowest walks of life. A prejudice, akin to a deeply-rooted instinct, takes possession of them, and they refuse to surrender the position assumed. Among the inmates of the Home at Ilford I particularly noticed a couple of children whom Dr. Barnardo rescued from a terrible fate under singular circumstances. The mother of these girls was found living in the last stage of poverty, amid filth and vermin such as need not be described, for fear of shocking the nerves of the sensitive reader. The woman was asked, as others have been asked, why, rather than subject her offspring to that fearful misery, she did not apply for admission to the workhouse? The workhouse! The very name stirred into a flame the embers of those feelings of independence which may have been a legacy of happier days. There were her children in a most appalling condition both of mind and body, but rather than they should enter the doors of the 'Union,' the woman declared she would see them rot before her eyes!

The reader will now admit that there is ample room for another Home to be added to the many already existing for the reception of destitute girls. Children of tender age are choice materials for the philanthropist to have put into his hands, for they most surely promise an ample return for the trouble and pecuniary expenditure incurred. They represent a harvest-field

into which we may enter and reap sheaves heavy with grain; but if left to themselves, they will, after having run the course of a wasted life, not pass away hence without being revenged on society.

Dr. Barnardo's successful endeavour to establish a Girls' Home will command the admiration and sympathy of all his friends, and I believe the blessing of God will attend the work, until the proposed Little Girls' Village shall spring up on the estate at Ilford. While asking ourselves what will be the results of such a work, we shall, of course, take into account the negative as well as the positive gain likely to be won. Evil prevented is so much good achieved; and to rescue for virtue and for God only one human being, who will be the mother and preceptor of another generation, represents a very substantial gain. It is cleansing the stream at the fountain-head, and exercising an influence for good which will extend through all time.

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